



A HISTORY OF THE  
CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN  
IN THE FIRST DISTRICT  
OF WEST VIRGINIA

by

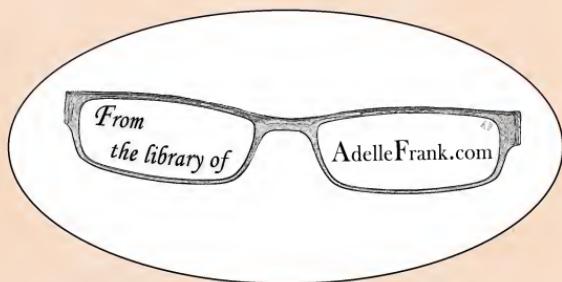
FOSTER MELVIN BITTINGER

for the  
District Committee on History



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# BEGINNINGS IN THE FIRST DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA

**BEGINNINGS IN THE FIRST DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA**

**1740** ECKERLIN  
**1760** EARLY  
**1800** SOUTH. BRANCH  
**1820** BEAVER RUN  
**1840**  
**1860**  
**1880**  
**1900**  
**1920**  
**1940**

**1874** WHITE PINE  
**1876** BEAN SETTLEMENT  
**1914** OLD FURNACE  
**1940** WILEY FORD  
**1908** CAPON CHAPEL  
**1860** TEAR COAT

**1856** HARMAN  
**1890** SENECA  
**1879** RED CREEK  
**1889** SUNNYSIDE  
**1849** GREENLAND  
**1887** KNOBLEY  
**1868** ALLEGHENY  
**1930** PETERSBURG  
**1835** SANDY CREEK  
**1855** TERRA ALTA  
**1855** EGLON  
**1887** FAIRVIEW MD.  
**TRANSFERRED TO WESTERN MD.**

**1940** BETHEL  
**1940** KEYSER  
**1940** MORGANTOWN  
**1940** TRANSFERRED FROM WESTERN PA. 1940

## BEGINNINGS OF CONGREGATIONS IN THE FIRST DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA

	1940	Name of Congregation
	1940	Member ship
1940	40	Bethel
(Transferred from Western Pa., in 1940)	119	Wiley Ford
1930		Morgantown
1920		Petersburg
1910		Keyser
1900		Old Furnace
1890		Capon Chapel
1880		North Fork
1870		Seneca
1860		Sunnyside
1850		White Pine
1840		Bean Settlement
1830		Harman
1820		Allegheny
1810		Tear Coat
1800		Terra Alta
1790		Eglon
1780		Knobley
1770		Sandy Creek
1760		Greenland
1750		Beaver Run
Early South Branch		Pine Grove
		Fairview
		Transferred to Western Maryland 1887
(Preaching prior to 1831 by Elder Sam Arnold)		Markleysburg congregation to Western Pennsylvania
Eckerlin		
Elizabeth Oberholzer from Germany first member in district		
Arnolds from Frederick, Md., to Manor Land, Va. now Beaver Run, W. Va., 1785		

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION, by Desmond W. Bittinger .....	7
PREFACE, Story of Writing .....	9

### CHAPTER I

Our People in West Virginia .....	11
a. Location .....	11
b. Streams of Entry .....	12
c. Nature of Settlers and Builders .....	13

### CHAPTER II

Beginnings Beyond the Sea .....	17
---------------------------------	----

### CHAPTER III

Beginnings in West Virginia .....	21
a. Oberholtzers .....	21
b. Eckerlins .....	21
c. The South Branch Church .....	30

### CHAPTER IV

The Congregations .....	33
-------------------------	----

### CHAPTER V

Unifying the Work in West Virginia .....	107
a. Recognition as a State District, and Representation at Annual Conference .....	107
b. The Institutions and Organizations .....	108
Religious Education .....	108
Camp Galilee .....	110
Council of Boards .....	111
Women's Work .....	111
Mission Board .....	112
Ministerial Board .....	113
The Orphanage .....	113
Men's Work .....	114

### CHAPTER VI

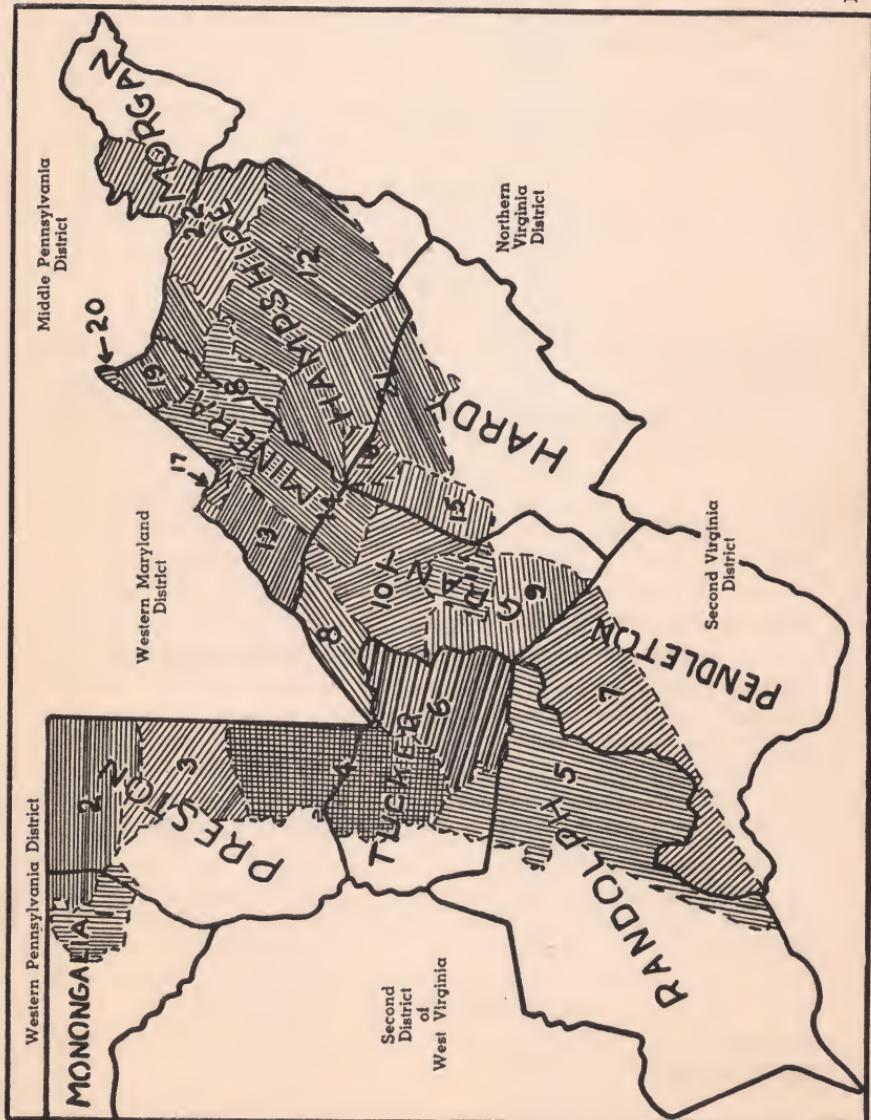
Biographies .....	116
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	175

First District  
of  
West Virginia

Key

(Unbroken lines indicate county boundaries. Shaded lines indicate congregational boundaries.)

1. Morgantown
2. Sandy Creek
3. Terra Alta
4. Egion
5. Harman
6. Red Creek
7. Seneca
8. Allegheny
9. North Fork
10. Greenland
11. Petersburg
12. Tear Coat
13. Sunnyside
14. Knobley
15. Bethel
16. White Pine
17. Keyser
18. Beaver Run
19. Old Furnace
20. Wiley Ford
21. Bean Settlement
22. Capon Chapel



## INTRODUCTION

History is continuous; it flows from the past into the future. The stream is ever changing and yet it is always the same. Each of us in our turn becomes a part of this stream of history, for it can flow into the future only through us. It has flowed to where we are through the lives of our progenitors; we are where we are because of them. Others who come after us will be in better conditions or worse conditions than we because of what we do in the stream of history. Hence we are a part of the past and a part of the future; what we do is important for we must not fail either one.

To understand where we are and what we are it is helpful to know from whence we came and how we got here. The directions in which we are tending also become clearer when we are able to see the line of unfolding history for more than one generation.

Church history therefore is both interesting and helpful; the church historian lights up the past and focuses a beam of this light into the future. But his task is not easy. He works usually with very incomplete records, and the records he has are often inaccurately kept. Hence his findings are characterized by gaps which he cannot fill and by conflicting information concerning the parts he can fill. Patiently and painstakingly he must search, and carefully he must sift every finding.

It is well that Brethren church history is now being written. Already it is almost too late. Most of the stalwart Brethren of antiquity who preached churches into existence were doers rather than recorders. Their records are written only in the memories of those whose lives they influenced. And some of those are already old and many are gone. The historians must lay hold of that material now or it will soon be gone forever.

Bro. Foster M. Bittinger is qualified by birth, experience and training to write the history of the Church of the Brethren in West Virginia. There flows in his veins the mingled blood of most of those about whom he has written. He, like his ancestors, has traveled far to serve the churches of the West Virginia hills and valleys in a manner not vastly dissimilar to that herein described. Wherever he went he collected historical data until this book grew into existence.

This history will stand as a monument to worthy work done by earnest and consecrated men. We believe that by doing that and by casting a ray of light in the direction of an-even brighter future it will have fulfilled the purpose of its author.

Desmond W. Bittinger.

Elgin, Illinois,  
October 20, 1944.

## PREFACE

For many years there has been an interest in a history of the Church of the Brethren in the First District of West Virginia. For many years a district committee on history had been in existence. They had often appealed to each of the various congregations to write its own individual history, but little came of it. This committee, composed of Brethren E. T. Fike, B. W. Smith, and A. S. Arnold, had collected some material and kept the interest alive.

In 1938 the writer moved into the district. When a vacancy occurred on the committee by the death of Bro. Arnold, he was placed on the committee to fill the place left vacant. He was also placed on the field as district fieldman, which gave him an opportunity to visit all the congregations of the district. Thus within a short time much valuable material could be collected. There was ready and eager co-operation in every congregation. Many individuals did a great amount of work in trying to find information and answering correspondence. There is not space to mention all here, but to them all go the thanks of the committee and of the church. And to the others on the committee who have ever been ready to help, who have placed all available material in their possession at my disposal, who have offered very helpful advice, I wish to give my personal thanks.

The material in chapter one on the nature of early settlers is compiled from many sources, but most valuable were the writings of John Kline, and my own observations, for I have lived among these people of the mountains and I love them. Chapter two is included for those who do not have access to a general history of the church. Chapter three contains, I believe, much original material never before published in this degree of completeness. In West Virginia histories Eckerlins are erroneously referred to as Eckarlys, etc. This is a more nearly complete story than has ever before been published. The Powers of the South Branch Valley have been an interesting study. The problem of their early church has not been fully solved, but light has been found on it. The material on the congregations, institutions and biographies has been the result of hundreds of interviews, hundreds of written letters or cards requesting information, and the helpful replies of hundreds of

people. Much of this would be unobtainable even now, for the ones who gave the information have already passed on.

We have attempted to attain completeness and accuracy instead of a polished treatment. Certainly we know that time will show omissions. The length of treatment of a biography, for example, is not always an indication of the importance attached to the subject. Limitation is sometimes the result of a lack of information. By decision of the committee, pictures of living ministers have been used only when they themselves supplied them. Where possible and worth while, quotations and sources have been given proper recognition and documentation. We have no claim to complete documentation, but still we express appreciation to all whose sources we have used. Where necessary permission to use material has been obtainable, it has been secured. We thank the authors and the publishers for this kind permission to use copyrighted sources.

It has been a pleasure and an inspiration to be a co-worker with the many in compiling this history. A new appreciation has been born in me for the great number of sacrificing, God-loving, faithful servants of the church in West Virginia. An increased love for the church and her people and a fuller dedication to the Christ and his way have come to me through this work. If something of that spirit can come from these pages to you, dear reader, then we are grateful and well paid.

Yours for a greater church,

Foster M. Bittinger,  
Oak View,  
Westernport, Maryland.

August 21, 1944

## CHAPTER I

### OUR PEOPLE IN WEST VIRGINIA

The First District of West Virginia is located in the eastern part of the state. It comprises most of the Eastern Panhandle and parts of the counties of Monongalia, Preston, Tucker, and Randolph in addition. It is bounded on the north by the Western District of Pennsylvania, Western Maryland, and Middle Maryland; on the east by the districts of Northern Virginia and Second Virginia; on the south by the districts of Northern Virginia, Second Virginia, and Second West Virginia; and on the west by Second West Virginia.

The boundary line as revised in 1928 by the committee from West Virginia and Northern Virginia runs as follows:

Beginning at the corner of West Virginia and Maryland at the Mason and Dixon line, running west with said line to Cheat River [since then revised to include the Morgantown congregation, the line continues westward with said Mason and Dixon line to the Monongahela River, thence it runs upward with said river to Uffington, thence eastward by air-line to where the Monongahela-Preston county line crosses West Virginia Route No. 7, thence by air-line to the point on the Cheat River where Big Sandy empties into said Cheat]; then up said river and Shavers Fork, a branch thereof, to Meadows, east of Elkins; thence with railroad to Oxley; thence with the Pocahontas and Randolph line in an easterly direction to the Pendleton line; thence in a northeasterly direction south and east of Riverton, on to Petersburg; thence with the river to Moorefield and to the bridge above Old Fields; thence with the Cunningham road across the mountain with the Wardensville road by Needmore, Bakers Mountains in a northeasterly direction to the Potomac River, just east of the Great Cacapon; thence up the Potomac River to the Fairfax Stone, thence north with the state line to the top of Backbone Mt. and with the top of the mountain to the Northwest Turnpike, thence air-line to where the Yough crosses the state line; thence north with the state line to the place of beginning.

Committee: E. T. Fike, A. S. Arnold.

Motion was made that the line be established as given by the committee, with the exception of Gladys and Oxley Brethren, that they be cared for by the Second District of Virginia as formerly.<sup>1</sup>

It is only through labor and painful effort, by energy grim

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, District Conference, First West Virginia, 1928.

and resolute, that we move on to better things. This is the lesson of history. Since we are determined to preserve the good of the heritage that is ours, the future holds great promise and grave responsibility for the wise and constructive builder of the future. These who have gone before were the trail blazers. You are the builders of the highway. You are the builders of a civilization. Will you, as they were, be creative adventurers?

Before the westward invasion of settlers, the ancient ridges between the Blue Ridge and the Alleghenies formed a great wilderness rampart which forced the medley tidewater population into a useful and neighborly community life, but shut out a westward progress. But, roughly, the second quarter of the eighteenth century (1725-50) marks the beginning of the overflow to the westward and southward. There were three routes of entrance into this region which is now the First District of West Virginia.

The earliest permanent settlers in the Eastern Panhandle entered from Pennsylvania by the Old Pack Horse Ford at Shepherdstown. By 1727 Morgan Morgan settled on Mill Creek in Berkeley County. In 1730 and within a few years thereafter other daring pioneers settled upon Opequon, Back Creek, Tuscarora Creek, Cacapon, and farther west on the South Branch. Down this route of migration from Germantown, Pennsylvania, via York, Frederick and Shepherdstown to the fertile South Branch Valley, came the first German settlers, likely even by 1740, who were the beginning of the Church of the Brethren in West Virginia.

This stream pushed on up the South Branch and in 1753 was met by a sudden wave of immigration coming directly westward through the mountain gaps from the Shenandoah Valley. These immigrants settled in the Upper Tract and Dyer settlements. This stream continued westward through Seneca on to Horse Camp Run, the present site of Harman. This second stream brought most of the Brethren who settled in Pendleton, Randolph, and Tucker counties, who make up the churches of Seneca, Harman, and Red Creek, as well as the churches of the Second District.

The third stream of immigration, which brought the Brethren to Preston, came over the newly built Braddock Road. A branch of that stream turned off to the southward to settle the

Sandy Creek Glades of northern Preston County in 1769. This was after the fateful ending of the Eckerlin attempt on Dunkard Bottom in Preston, and after the ending of the French and Indian Wars, which established peace on the frontier in West Virginia.

Of course the very earliest route of migration to Preston County was the Great War Path of the Indians from "Ohio via Fish creek and Indian creek and White Day creek through Preston County (near the site of Masontown and Reedsville and crossing Cheat at Dunkard Bottom) to the South Branch of the Potomac—a route much used by the Indians in their attacks on the white settlements"<sup>2</sup> in the South Branch Valley. This was the pathway of the Eckerlins and the Pringles, and after the Revolution of many of the German settlers and Brethren to the southern part of Preston County.

The close of the French and Indian War and of the Revolutionary War established peace on the frontier, and the barrier of the Allegheny was finally broken. Settlement came rapidly. But the Brethren were late. Not until about 1820 did they begin to penetrate into Preston County and westward from the Allegheny. Thus after the first attempt by the Eckerlins in 1750 nearly three quarters of a century passed before Brethren feet trod the wilderness paths west of the Alleghenies.

The people of the mountains of West Virginia may be careless in clothes and personal appearance but they have redeeming qualities and produce a good class of American citizens. They are a kind, sympathetic, hospitable group, American to the core, and about as free from class feeling as you can find anywhere. A hired man or girl is one of the family. These pioneers had to stand together for convenience and protection, and the habit has been handed down. Whenever one needs help he is likely to get it. There is an inbred courtesy if sometimes an awkwardness in expressing it. Gross crimes are not common here. In many places people go away and leave their homes unlocked. This is especially true in Brethren communities.

John Kline of sainted memory through these parts was the very first minister to bring and carry on what may be called an aggressive effort to spread a knowledge of gospel truth through the present counties of Pendleton, Hardy, Grant, Hampshire, Mineral, Randolph, Pocahontas, and others. He knew the dis-

<sup>2</sup> Callahan, J. M., *Semi-Centennial History of West Virginia*, 1913. Page 10.

trict well in the middle part of the nineteenth century. He was one of the overseers of part of the territory. I should like to convey to you his impression of the people and the country, sometimes quoting directly and sometimes condensing somewhat. The following is from his diary for the year 1859:

Those living in the highly cultivated States of our Union can hardly bring their minds to realize the conditions in which those people lived at the time that Brother Kline and Brother Thomas were laboring so faithfully among them. Let me sketch a picture of the average house, its surroundings, and its occupants: It is a log house, built up by notching the ends of the logs so as to fit together at the corners, and rises high enough in the middle to make one story below and a half story above. A high chimney of stones is built up on the outside, with the wide fireplace on the inside. The chinks between the logs are filled up with a mortar composed of clay and straw. The chimney is supplied with one extra small flue at the side of the large flue, and at the bottom of the small flue, about four feet above the hearth, is a small opening for light. This light is produced from the burning of small pieces of rich pine knots placed in the small opening, and as one piece burns out another is inserted, the smoke from the pine, the meanwhile, being carried off through the small flue. Above the door of entrance antlers in pairs may be seen carefully fastened to the side of the house, as evidences of success in deer hunting. And more than once did two brethren ministers feast on venison in the present journey, for it was the chosen season for deer hunting. When the house is approached by a stranger, the father, if present, stands near the door with a doubtful look, as much as to ask within himself: "Who can that be, and what is fetching him here?" He has, however, a kind heart under a rough exterior. His wife is diffident at the first introduction, but gain her confidence by true Christian behavior, and you find the heart of a true woman in her. The children retire upon the stranger's first entering the house, but let him show a love for them, and they will soon play with his watch chain and ask him what it is for.<sup>3</sup>

I love to go to the mountains. The people seem to pay better attention to what is said, and manifest better behavior at our meetings than they do in the more thickly settled portions of our state. It is true that ignorance abounds in some places; but are the souls of the poor less dear to our Lord than the souls of the rich? On one occasion the Lord referred to the fact that the Gospel was preached to the poor as a proof of its heavenly origin. But there are intelligent people living among these mountains. And in the way of hospitality and genuine kindness, meeting you with a smile and hearty welcome, they are probably unsurpassed as a people, rich and poor alike.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Funk, Benjamin, *Life of John Kline*, Pages 422ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* Page 260.

The indoctrination of these people into the beliefs and practices of Revealed Truth as held by the Brethren was so profound, so clear, so convincing, that they today stand abreast of others in defense of these doctrines as at first received, in the face of all isms and religious innovations of the time.<sup>5</sup>

It is true even to 1943.

The people living among the mountains are generally hospitable, and much attached to the scenes of their childhood and that wild freedom of nature found in the mountains that surround them. The motto engraved upon the State Seal of West Virginia is very expressive—translated it reads thus: "MOUNTAINEERS ARE EVER FREE." The people are noted for the attention with which they listen to the preaching of the Gospel. Bro. Kline often spoke of the pleasure it gave him to preach in these sections, because the word was received with so much readiness. His success among them proved this. They were devotedly attached to him, and it is questionable if in any part of the brotherhood deeper grief was felt over his martyrdom than that which filled the hearts of the brethren and sisters and friends in West Virginia.<sup>6</sup>

Among the Brethren of West Virginia we find such names as Abraham, John, Jesse, Samuel, Rachael, Rebecca, Peter, Thomas, and Sarah from the Old Testament, and from the New Testament and its influence such as James, John, Nathaniel, Peter, Phoebe, Christian, Michael, Magdalena, Christinia, Charity, and many others showing something of the place the Bible held in their lives.

Some of these colonists grew cold and were finally lost to the church, but most came to their new homes bringing with them both their religion and their Bibles. They set up Christian homes faithful to the vows they had made beyond the mountains. These few increased in numbers and in soul-winning influence, and grew into prosperous churches. In this way the Brethren churches on the West Virginia frontier were extended. Each family became a root and from these roots in time came the fruitage in a Brethren community.

During the last quarter century, however, many young people have been going away for training and education. Many remain away. This district needs more of those youth who will come back with broader and more progressive views. There is much room for mission work right here, as there was in the days of the beloved John Kline, the Arnolds, the Fikes, the Thomases,

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Page 261.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. Page 434.

and others. Folks take well to new ideas and are eager to learn. Modern conveniences, good roads, and electricity have come to almost every section of the district. It is taking well to the best of the modern world. A more adequate leadership is needed among many of the smaller churches. Who will answer the call?

## CHAPTER II

### BEGINNINGS BEYOND THE SEA

The Church of the Brethren was born out of the religious chaos following the Reformation in Germany. The Roman Catholic Church had become corrupt and lost its grip. The Lutheran and Reformed churches had made an attempt at religious freedom, but soon came under the protection of the state, and these three churches became the official churches, meting out persecution to all who dared to profess any other faith. The Pietists pleaded for greater personal purity and more humility, and taught that religion was essentially a matter of heart.

Thought was, however, terribly confused; almost everybody was interested in religion and took a hand in discussing it, yet comparatively few would have been able to give a clear, concise statement of what they believed, or why they believed as they did.<sup>1</sup>

A Way was needed. To the founders of the Church of the Brethren, no creed, but the New Testament, was to be the Way. They believed that it furnished a complete guide, and by prayer and fasting, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, sought to find the Way. That Way led them out of chaos to a course of action, a new life.

Added to the religious terror were the many years of almost constant warfare. The fateful Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) involved all of continental Europe. In 1688 there began "a chapter in the history of the Palatinate which has no parallel in the history of the world, for savage brutality, and atrocities perpetrated by French soldiers. . . . The whole country was pillaged and made desolate; towns and cities were laid in ashes, and more than one hundred thousand of the inhabitants murdered. . . . There was no letting up of these outrages by the French until the year 1697 when peace came with the treaty of Ryswick."<sup>2</sup> This experience made a war-weary and a war-hating people.

Into that world Ernst Hochmann was born in 1670 and in it

<sup>1</sup> Flory, J. S., *Literary Activity of the Brethren in the Eighteenth Century*.  
Page 2.

<sup>2</sup> Dove, F. D., *Cultural Changes in the Church of the Brethren*. Pages 41,  
42.

he died in 1721. "No other reformer was so closely associated with Alexander Mack, or had as much influence over the first members of the Church of the Brethren as Hochmann."<sup>3</sup> He with Mack made many preaching tours over Germany. In 1702 he was arrested and thrown into the castle at Detmold, and was not released until he had written out a confession of faith, a statement of great importance since it shows the position of the church at that time.<sup>4</sup>

Alexander Mack exerted a great influence over the organization of the Church of the Brethren. He believed the ordinances of the New Testament could not be carried out without a church organization. He was born in 1679, was well educated in the universities of his day, and was the possessor of valuable property near Schriesheim. With others he prayerfully and carefully searched the Scriptures. In 1708 he and seven others met by the side of the Eder River near Schwarzenau, Germany, and after prayer and consecration, they directed one of their number to baptize Bro. Mack, and he in turn baptized the other seven. That marks the beginning of the Church of the Brethren, and Bro. Mack is considered to be her founder. Under his care the church increased rapidly and in seven years there were four other congregations. But Elder Mack did not desire to be known as the founder of the church. The Great Master is the Founder and Bro. Mack only a minister and servant.

There were two cardinal principles that led to the organization: spirituality in worship and observance of all the ordinances of the New Testament. If the New Testament taught a thing, the Brethren wanted to do that thing. Christianity was the Way as revealed in the New Testament. As a protest to the state religions of the day they proclaimed the maxim, "No exercise of force in religion." They have been loyal to this principle of noncoercion. Thus since infant baptism could not be of the free will, they opposed it; since oath taking implied pressure, they opposed it; since war is an interference with the rights of others, they forbade members to participate; since God is recognized as being above the state they sustained freedom of conscience and would obey God rather than men. They resented all persecution, were much persecuted themselves, but they never perse-

<sup>3</sup> Sharp, S. Z., *Educational History*. Page 26.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* Page 27.

cuted a single soul. The church was born to persecution. Her members were chained in galleys, cast into prison, suspended by thumbs and toes, exiled, dispossessed, but her days of greatest persecution were also her days of greatest strength and growth.

The number of members in Europe will never be known. That they were numerous is certain. The largest list yet made contains only two hundred and fifty-five names; but it is evident that this is but a fraction of the whole number.<sup>5</sup>

Amidst the hardships and persecutions in Germany it was not remarkable that they looked with longing eyes toward America and spiritual freedom, which their souls so much longed for. So in 1719 the first group, a part of the Creyfelt congregation, with Peter Becker as their leader, took the first venture. Definite information is lacking, but the voyage is said to have been a hard one.

They landed at Philadelphia and made their way to Germantown, with which place the Brethren have been inseparably connected from that time to this. Here was organized the first congregation and here the first house of worship for the Brethren was erected in America. This was the first center and from here they moved out to form other settlements and churches.

The first love feast in America was held Christmas Day, 1723, and then the first organization of the Brethren in America was effected. Bro. Becker was chosen leader and minister. That day six were baptized and the day was closed with a communion service with twenty-three members participating. The church had taken root, and was now organized, but organized for work. The next fall an evangelistic party of fourteen men pushed into the woods to visit scattered members, encourage believers, and preach to unbelievers. As a result of this first missionary journey in America eleven were baptized, two new congregations were organized and two ministers were elected. Thus in America, as in Germany, the church had become a missionary church.<sup>6</sup>

Up to the time of the Revolutionary War the Brethren seem to have spread over Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia. Reaching out beyond and into the broad expanse of the West and the South was the task of postcolonial days.

The Church of the Brethren at that time was an aggressive body, small in number, but generous in spirit. It stood for

<sup>5</sup> Flory, J. S., *Literary Activity of the Brethren*. Page 25.

<sup>6</sup> Moyer, Elgin, *Missions in the Church of the Brethren*. Pages 19, 20.

higher education, earnest evangelism, pastoral care of the churches, Sunday School work, and sincere piety and devout living among its members. The church of today will do well to inform itself about the history of this early church and revive its spirit in our modern life.<sup>7</sup>

Such a study would be fruitful for our day as would also be a study of the apostolic church. The Church of the Brethren, like the apostolic church, was born and thrived in a dark day, a day of adversity. This is again her day. May she again be true to her great opportunity.

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<sup>7</sup> Cable and Sanger, *Educational Blue Book*. Page 27.

## CHAPTER III

### THE BEGINNINGS IN WEST VIRGINIA

#### (A) THE OBERHOLTZERS

From the records of the Idleman families of Greenland information is secured about the first Brethren family in West Virginia.

Somewhere in Germany Elizabeth Bussard married a man of the name of Oberholtzer, and there these two joined the Church of the Brethren. A son was born to this union. About 1740 they decided to come to America. They took voyage as redemptioners, as they likely did not have money to pay the fare; thus upon arrival they would be bound out for about three years to one who would pay the passage for them. But because of the crowded and ill-ventilated condition of the ship and bad food and water, both husband and son died on the voyage.

Sister Oberholtzer, upon arrival, was sold for three years' servitude to a man living near what is now Moorefield, West Virginia. He was an honest man and no doubt she was a good worker for she was set free after serving only half her time. So far as is known she was the first member of the Church of the Brethren to make her home permanently in what is now the state of West Virginia, though the Eckerlins, later spoken of, resided here, as did Alexander Mack, Jr., but little later. Sister Oberholtzer later married John Stingly, and they had a son named William who later moved into what is now the territory of the Greenland congregation, and now is numbered among the ancestry of the Idlemans. He is buried about one-half mile north of the Idleman residence at Greenland.

At the time of her arrival the country must have been very thinly settled, for a few years later, in 1748, "there were about 200 people along the entire course"<sup>1</sup> of the South Branch of the Potomac.

#### (B) THE ECKERLINS

The Eckerlins, and later with them Alexander Mack, Jr.,

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<sup>1</sup> Callahan, J. M., *Semi-Centennial History of West Virginia*. Page 17.

were the second to bring the Dunker name to West Virginia. Around this Eckerlin family, so closely connected with the history of the Church of the Brethren in Europe, at Germantown, at Ephrata, in the First District of West Virginia, and with the very early history of Preston and Monongalia counties, hangs a fringe of romance more inspiring than the dreams of poet or novelist. Michael Eckerlin was a Counsellor of Strasbourg, Germany, and a Catholic. Touched by the message of truth from the lips of some pious preacher on his way to Switzerland, Eckerlin resigned his office, left his church, fled with his wife and four sons to Schwarzenau, the birthplace of the Church of the Brethren, was baptized by Alexander Mack, Sr., founder of the church, and triumphantly died in the faith.

There is some confusion of evidence as to just when the family became members of the church, but Brumbaugh lists among those who joined the church in Europe Michael Eckerlin and his wife, Samuel Eckerlin, Israel Eckerlin, Imanuel Eckerlin, Daniel Eckerlin (a friend of Alexander Mack, Jr.) and Gabriel Eckerlin.<sup>2</sup> This would seem to establish the fact that they were members of the church before leaving Europe. In 1725 the widow, Sister Michael Eckerlin, and her four sons, Israel, Samuel, Imanuel, and Gabriel, came to America and settled near Germantown, Pennsylvania. One day Bro. Michael Wohlfahrt visited the family and spoke eloquently of the new awakening under Beissel in the Conestoga country. The oldest son, Israel, in 1727 went to see for himself. He was pleased with the country, and at first worshiped with the Mennonites. He liked their simplicity of dress but could never adapt himself to their mode of worship. He began working for Christopher Sower, who later became prominent in the early history of the church, and was taken to the meetings of Beissel by Sower. He tells the result.<sup>3</sup> On Whitsuntide of the year 1728 he and his master, Christopher Sower, were incorporated into the new congregation by holy baptism. As this was before the division between the early Brethren and the Beissel party this may seem to indicate that he had not been baptized previously in Europe. He was soon joined by his brothers: Samuel, Imanuel, and Gabriel. The pious old mother followed her sons and died in the Conestoga country in

<sup>2</sup> Brumbaugh, M. G., *A History of the Brethren*. Page 56.

<sup>3</sup> *Chronicon Ephratense*. Pages 41, 42.

1729. The four sons became prominent members of the Ephrata movement, and with Beissel removed to Ephrata in 1732. This was the beginning of the monastic Society of Ephrata and the break with the early German Baptist Church or the early Brethren. But it was not the end of the Eckerlin influence on the church. The four brothers were known in the monastery as Brothers Onesimus, Jephume, Jotham, and Elimelech. Gabriel became the first prior of the monastery, but was succeeded in 1740 by Israel.

Israel was an exceptionally good businessman, and under his management the mystical dreamers became a colony of toilers. He added to the equipment most of the mills, built the convent on Zion and planted an orchard of one thousand trees. He was much loved and had close followers, but his prominence turned Superintendent Beissel against him, and it was agreed that he should leave the society for a while. During his absence all hymns written by him, everything that had originated with him, were collected by the society and burned. The convent built by Eckerlin was no longer used by Beissel. A large church bell the Eckerlins had bought was sold to the Lutherans. Even the orchard they had planted was cut down, much to the chagrin of the whole community. The sawmill they had brought to Ephrata, which had brought much prosperity, was destroyed, thus ending the mammon of the Eckerlins, Beissel said. But among the common people they left a good name. Even Superintendent Beissel said, after they had been gone some time, "God can judge the Eckerlins for they came so near to him, but your quarrels he cannot judge for they are too far removed from him."<sup>4</sup>

It was the year 1744 when this Eckerlin-Beissel controversy reached its height. In that year Israel Eckerlin and his brother Samuel, next to him in age, together with Alexander Mack, Jr., who was in the convent at the time and took sides with the Eckerlins, and Peter Miller went on a preaching tour through the northeastern states. Upon their return, peace still did not prevail at Ephrata and on September 4, 1745, Israel and Samuel Eckerlin, with Alexander Mack, Jr., moved into the wilderness about four hundred miles toward the setting of the sun. They stopped at the Funk settlement near Strasburg, Virginia, but only briefly. However, then or later they bought the farm now

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* Page 222.

owned by Major Newell, opposite the present town of Strasburg. Thence they moved on up the Shenandoah and came to the New River in what is now West Virginia where they founded the settlement which they called Mahanaim, the precise location of which is unknown, though it was probably near Dunkard Bottom, a place much mentioned in the Revolutionary War. They had nine hundred acres there. There upon the fertile soil was erected a cabin and a settlement started which was the first to leave the Dunkard name in West Virginia. Later Samuel returned to Ephrata and brought Gabriel back with him. From here in 1747 Alexander Mack, Jr., returned to Germantown and made complete reconciliation with the Brethren there.<sup>5</sup> He soon became one of the outstanding leaders at Germantown.

Israel was now devoting his time to theology and mysticism, writing industriously. Samuel was practicing medicine among the border settlements and Indians, winning for himself the title *Doctor*, by which later historians speak of him. Gabriel became a hunter and trapper, supplying the household with needed food. But all did not go well. In 1748 the Ohio Company was formed, having received a grant of five hundred thousand acres of land lying along the Ohio, between the Kanawah and Monongahela, and planned settlements to divert the Indian trade from Pennsylvania. Plans for settlements by Germans from Pennsylvania were prevented by Virginia's law against dissenters. These legal difficulties with the state of Virginia were perhaps also accompanied by an unfriendly attitude on the part of surrounding settlers who were settling for the Ohio Company and the state of Virginia.

So in 1750 when Israel and Gabriel returned to Germantown to trade their wares they remained for several months with the Brethren there. They again visited Ephrata but found reconciliation impossible. How successful was the effort at Germantown, I do not know, but it must have been friendly, and they found Peter Becker and Gants sympathetic. A number of Brethren from Germantown were considering returning to West Virginia with them and would later have done so had it not been for the breaking out of Indian ravages so soon with the coming of the French and Indian War.

Israel had fellowshiped much with the Brethren and was es-

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* Page 226.

pecially friendly with Peter Becker and the two Macks. It was he who definitely left his lasting impress upon the Church of the Brethren by being the one who made the remarks which resulted in the formation of Standing Committee as we now have it at our Annual Conference. At that time all the Baptist denominations, of which we were one, had annual meetings. Endless discussions would arise over matters of controversy. Upon the observation by Israel Eckerlin that useful time was wasted by having open discussion upon all personal grievances,<sup>6</sup> it was agreed that a committee from all denominations should hear all the questions and decide which ones should come before the main body, and further that the question should come up as from the congregation and not from the individual. These two decisions evidently gave precedent for our Standing Committee and for our manner of sending queries to Annual Conference. That occurred in 1742 while Israel was still prior at Ephrata.

After having remained for about five months at Ephrata, but completely renouncing that society, and having restored friendly relations with the Brethren at Germantown and having completed their trading, Israel and Gabriel started back to West Virginia in the fall of 1750. However, when they came to the Allegheny Mountains they met with such masses of snow and such severe weather that it was with great difficulty and great danger to themselves that they crossed those fearful mountains and came to regions inhabited by the Delaware Indians. These Indians were the tribe with whom William Penn had established his treaty of friendship and with whom the nonresistants of Pennsylvania had been having friendly relations. These Indians now showed the two Eckerlin brothers from the pacifists of Pennsylvania the greatest of friendship and gave them protection for the winter. Here in the spring of 1751 the Eckerlins were joined by Dr. Samuel Eckerlin, and their first home in the wilderness of West Virginia was for a while abandoned.

The hospitable Delawares helped the brothers find a suitable site for a new home and promised their protection to these peace-loving settlers. This settlement was on the Monongahela River about ten miles below the present site of Morgantown, at the mouth of the creek which now bears their name, Dunker Creek.

At this time the bloody war between the French and Indians

<sup>6</sup> Brumbaugh, M. G., *A History of the Brethren*. Page 479.

and the English was in progress. The Delawares therefore told the Eckerlins that they could no longer guarantee them safety here as the French savages would overrun this region. They led them to a region across the mountains, on the east side of Cheat River, where they believed the enemies would not come, saying at the same time that whenever danger threatened they would warn them. This was a place on the Cheat River, near where Kingwood now stands, called Dunkard Bottom. Here the brothers built their cabin, about one mile above the present Cadell Bridge. In all likelihood their cabin stood at the mouth of Buffalo Creek. A small clearing can be remembered as having been at this point, and also fragments have been found.<sup>7</sup> Here the Eckerlins again left the Dunkard name at another place, Dunkard Bottom. This bottom begins at the Old Fairfax Ferry and reaches well up the valley to the railroad crossing at Trowbridge. It is the largest area of truly level land in Preston County and includes an island of some size. It became a historic spot. These were likely the first white men to set foot in Preston County. Here founded by the Eckerlins was the first settlement in that county; here was the first settlement as such by the Dunkards, though they at the time were perhaps not considered as members of that church now called the Church of the Brethren, then called the German Baptist. But they were at least an offshoot of it and so closely associated with it that their history is a part of the history of the Brethren in West Virginia.

This historic settlement is mentioned in all histories of trans-Allegheny pioneers and histories of West Virginia and of Preston County; however, it is usually misspelled *Eckarly* or *Eckerly* and Samuel is miscalled *Thomas*. Their places of settlement, the dates, their names, their standing with the German Baptist or Brethren Church, and their final end have been so differently given and confused that I have gone to long and careful research to establish their true history. This chapter is long because I feel that the matter is important enough that we of West Virginia should know the facts as best we can establish them.

Here on Dunkard Bottom along the Cheat lived the Eckerlins for four years. Here they built a large home and kept a number of servants. Here they raised all their needed vegetables and kept their larder supplied with meat from the wilderness. Here

<sup>7</sup> Morton, O. F., *History of Preston County, Part I.*

they raised a large number of horses and were comfortably situated. From here they likely made frequent trips to Virginia, for they were purchasing land and having deeds and land surveys made. Often they traded with the Brethren and members of the Ephrata Society of Strasburg.

In the surveyor's books of Augusta County, in which all of this territory was then included, is the following entry:

Surveyed for Samuel Eckerlin 360 acres of land in Augusta County, Lying on ye East Side of Monongalo River Between the mouth of Indian and Eckerlin's Creek. This 20th ap. 1753.

By Andrew Lewis assts. Thomas Lewis, Sur.

This actual surveyor was Gen. Andrew Lewis, who fought and won the battle of Point Pleasant and whom Washington thought the proper man to lead the American armies in the Revolution. He also surveyed for Samuel Eckerlin four other tracts, aggregating eight hundred twenty acres. Two of the entire five were on the east side of the river. One is mentioned as "three miles below where Eckerlin now lives." On the ninth of November, 1754, five thousand acres of land were granted to Samuel Eckerlin and others, "part of the vacant land lying between Lord Fairfax Line and the line of John Blair and Co.'s and thay of ye Ohio Company."<sup>8</sup> Although this grant did not go into effect, because of the Indian wars that broke out the following season, it is highly probable that this land was to include Dunkard Bottom. From this extensive planning and purchasing of land it seems evident that the Eckerlins were planning to establish a settlement or colony of their co-religionists, not the Ephrata monastics, but the Brethren from Germantown, with whom plans were pretty well underway before the war with the French and Indians broke out.

At one time during this war the Iroquois went to war against their northern neighbors, but were defeated and fled naked. In fleeing they took the clothing and the carpets from the Eckerlins. This should have been a warning. The Delawares also sent word that they could no longer guarantee them security at that place. But they heeded it not. After some of their journeys to Virginia the Indians invaded these eastern settlements. This created suspicion that the Eckerlins were spies. The Virginians did not want them to live there any longer, but Samuel tried to

<sup>8</sup> *Survey Book of Augusta County, Va.*

get permission from the governor of Virginia. It was refused. Braddock's defeat in 1755 left all the western frontier open to the ravages of the French and the Indians. Often they came down east as far as the South Branch Valley. In 1756 Dr. Samuel Eckerlin went back to Strasburg for supplies, likely following the famous old Indian trail called the "Great War Path" which crossed the Cheat River near their settlement on Dunkard Bottom and went eastward through what is now Cranesville, in Preston County, through a corner of Maryland and on into the South Branch Valley and the Shenandoah Valley. Having obtained his supplies he stopped at Fort Pleasant, which was erected in the Indian Old Fields, now in Hardy County, on the South Branch of the Potomac, one and a half mile above what is known as The Trough. Here he was arrested as a spy. The suspicious settlers would not believe his tale of a settlement out in the midst of Indian territory. They had suffered much and would take no chances. By earnest pleading, he obtained his freedom on these conditions: he was to pursue his journey under armed guard, and if they found his statements false, they were to bring him back as a renegade and Indian spy.<sup>9</sup>

While Samuel was gone the bloodthirsty Indians under a French leader had come to his home on the Cheat. Israel did not allow his writing to be disturbed until they tied his hands to his back. They packed all the property on horses, of which the Eckerlins had a great number, set fire to the house and left. Meanwhile Samuel and the soldiers arrived while the embers were still glowing. Likely he believed and hoped that his brothers had been killed and their bodies burned with their home, but, though many histories tell of their being scalped and murdered, the best evidence points to another end. Bowed down with this crushing grief and disappointment, Samuel stepped out alone to let the tears flow unchecked. It seems most of his life had been bitter disappointment. An Indian hidden there to see, as was their custom, whether there would be pursuit, was moved by his tears to spare his life. Probably the goodness of these nonresistant children of God who had given all for conscience' sake was remembered, and perhaps they would have lived on unmolested by the Indians had it not been for their white French leader. Thus was crimsoned with blood the first

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<sup>9</sup> Wiley, S. T., *History of Preston County*. Pages 22-24.

chapter of the history of the Brethren in West Virginia, and of the English occupation of Preston County.

Samuel was now glad to accompany his guard on their return, and the valley of the Cheat seems to have known him no more. Little is known of his later life. But in 1767 when the war was over and the English controlled this frontier Samuel Eckerlin took action to recover his New River survey. In his bill he stated that he had left his bonds with his brothers, and that they were destroyed when the brothers were murdered and the effects burned. It is curious that two river tracts, some two hundred miles apart, should have received the same name from the same person.

According to the *Chronicon Ephratense*<sup>10</sup> and Brumbaugh's history,<sup>11</sup> Israel and Gabriel were taken from there to Fort Duquesne, and from there to Montreal where they were given over to a Jesuit convent as prisoners of war. From there they were taken to Quebec, and finally with other prisoners were carried across the Atlantic Ocean to France. Here as his end approached Gabriel was received into an order of the monks of the Catholic Church. Soon after this both died. Samuel returned to the hospitable Brethren of eastern Pennsylvania and there died, leaving his will on record there.

What a family romance! The father flees for conscience' sake to Schwarzenau to the Brethren. He gives his life for that faith. His widow crosses the Atlantic to find a grave. His sons run the round of religious fanaticism, Indian life, wilderness tragedy, and international strife. The oldest son is carried back almost in sight of his ancestral home, and closes his days in the ecclesiastical order from which his father fled only one generation before. The second oldest after a round of settlements with a radius of four hundred miles which left the Dunker name in at least three places in West Virginia, after a round of religious faiths, finally returns to the hospitable arms of the Brethren in eastern Pennsylvania, for there his will is on record. With Brumbaugh's words we close: "Let history name another equal family story or consent to the dictum, the Eckerlin family is without a parallel in the annals of the world."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Chronicon Ephratense*. Page 232.

<sup>11</sup> Brumbaugh, M. G., *A History of the Brethren*. Page 469.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* Page 470.

## (C) THE SOUTH BRANCH CHURCH

In point of time South Branch Church was the first one established in West Virginia by two very able young ministers, Martin and Valentine Powers, who settled on the South Branch of the Potomac River. . . . These young men built up one of the largest pioneer churches in the colonial period. They were under the eldership of Daniel Leatherman of Maryland, but when they turned sympathetic with the cause of the British Tories in the colonies Bishop Leatherman called Elders Jacob and Henry Danner to help him. The matter could not be adjusted and was taken to the yearly meeting in 1783 (1785). The South Branch Church declined and none of the later churches kept the name.<sup>13</sup>

Since this church was almost forgotten or unknown until a few years ago, and since its exact location has not until now been established I shall quote from the deed made by Henry Sansisco conveying the property to Valentine Powers in 1772 after he had lived there one whole year.

This indenture made the seventh day of December in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-two, BETWEEEN Henry Sansisco of the County of Augusta in the Colony of Virginia of the One Part and Valentine Powers of the County of Hampshire and Colony aforesaid, the other part, WITNESSETH that for and in consideration of the sum of two hundred and fifty Pounds current money of Virginia to the said Henry Sansisco by the said Valentine Powers at or before the sealing of these Patents and Receipt whereof he doth hereby acknowledge . . . Doth grant bargain full alien release and confirm unto the said Valentine Powers (in his actual possession now being by virtue of a Bargain and Sale to him thereof made by the said Henry Sansisco for one whole year—) a certain Tract of Land lying on the Drains of the South Branch of the Potomac River joining to a Line of Lord Fairfax's Manor of Wappacomo and in the said County of Hampshire, bounded as followeth, to wit: BEGINNING at three White Oaks in the said Manor Line by a path leading to the Clay Lick and extending thence North forty two Degrees West one hundred & sixty-four Poles to two White Oaks by a drain at the foot of a Mountain thence North forty six Degrees East four hundred and eighty seven Poles to two White Oaks near a Branch thence South forty-four Degrees East one hundred and sixty-four Poles to two White Oaks and a Hickory on the Manor Line thence along the Course of the Manor Line reversed South Forty-six Degrees West Four hundred & Eighty seven Poles to the Beginning, containing Five Hundred Acres, which was granted to James Rutledge—in his Lifetime by Deed from the Proprietor of the Northern Neck bearing Date the twenty-Eighth Day of May in the year of our Lord one Thou-

<sup>13</sup> Henry, J. M., Centennial Speech, Salem church, August 11, 1935.

sand seven Hundred & forty-Eight and all Houses, Buildings, Or-chards, Ways, Whatsoever, etc. . . .<sup>14</sup>

This establishes the West Virginia home of Bro. Powers on the Manor line, the line marking the southern boundary of Lord Fairfax, in the South Branch Valley, which would be at the crossing of these two definite courses, which would be slightly to the south and west of Petersburg. That this is true many other investigations show.

There were two Powers who moved to Petersburg, Virginia (now West Virginia), on the South Branch of the Potomac River. One name was Martin Powers and it is conceded by the Powers who now live at Moorefield that they were members of the Tunker or German Baptist Church. But these relatives do not know whether they were ministers in the church or not. The dates that you have mentioned (1785-1790) would possibly correspond with the time they lived at Petersburg.<sup>15</sup>

So it would have been Grant County, instead of the present Hardy or Hampshire, though at that time it was all Hampshire.

Here then, perhaps, partly within the present bounds of the Petersburg congregation, lived two great preachers of the early church, from 1771 to at least 1790. Here was one of the largest congregations of the colonial days. Then some differences developed between the Powers and the brotherhood on going to war and the taking of oaths. The congregation sent a query to the Annual Conference of 1785 which brings to us some of the teaching of the early church on those subjects. I quote only enough of the reply to show something of the size and standing of the congregation and her ministry.

Our cordial and united wish and greeting of love and peace to the beloved members, brethren and sisters on the South Branch, especially to the loving brethren, Valentine Power, and Martin Power, and all the members in your vicinity. . . . Inasmuch as we have in part seen, and also heard, that there has arisen some difference in the doctrines among some brethren of your church and others, and having also seen the letter of the loving brother, Valentine Power, which he has written to the big meeting, and heard from it his views about "carrying on war,"—we could not agree with such view. . . .

And as to the swearing of oaths, we believe the word of Christ, that in all things which we are to testify, we shall say what is yea, or what is true with yea, and what is nay, or not true with nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. And herewith we will conclude for this. This we intend to send you

<sup>14</sup> *Deed Book 3, Entry No. 116, Hampshire Court House, Romney, W. Va.*

<sup>15</sup> From personal letter by George T. Leatherman, Old Fields.

in writing with our dear brethren Daniel Leatherman, and Jacob Danner, and Henry Danner.

Written May 15, 1785, at the big meeting on Big Conewago.<sup>16</sup>

This decision was sent in a letter by the three above-named brethren as a committee to the South Branch church. The committee must not have succeeded fully in bringing them back into line, for in 1790 there is another minute from Annual Meeting:

Unanimously concluded, that we desire and pray that the beloved brother, Valentine Power, would desist from his strange notion, because he has renounced with us before God, angels, and men, all things that are contrary to the wholesome doctrine, and we believe and confess that Christ has forbidden to his followers the swearing of oaths and partaking of war. Hence we must keep to his word and truth, and withdraw ourselves from every brother that returns again to swearing and war. It is impossible for us to break the bread of communion with such a brother, who pretends the higher powers were requiring such of him. For they can not compel us, if they would, because we are to obey God rather than men.<sup>17</sup>

That is the last known reference to the church on the South Branch. It would seem that the fellowship with the brotherhood soon broke and likely the Powers went to the Methodist church. If they left anything to posterity in the Church of the Brethren it is the Old Pine church, the oldest church of the denomination in the district. Since the membership of this early congregation was large and since the population was widely scattered it seems to be the only logical explanation of the erection of that church at so early a date, and in conjunction with the Methodist denomination. (For further discussion see White Pine, page 101.) If such be true then we can vision in 1790 a rather large membership, scattered from what is now Petersburg to Purgitsville, about then buying a plot of land and beginning the erection of the first church of the Brethren in West Virginia. But they are breaking with the fellowship of the brotherhood, their ministers are leaving the church, and the church though completed stands almost unused for fifty years.

Thus ended in near oblivion another attempt in West Virginia. The Old Pine church was built by 1814, but was unused for some time, so say the oldest residents. This alone yet remains of the old South Branch church, oldest group in West Virginia.

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<sup>16</sup> Annual Meeting Minutes, 1785.

<sup>17</sup> Annual Meeting Minutes, 1790.

# *Churches and Landmarks in West Virginia*

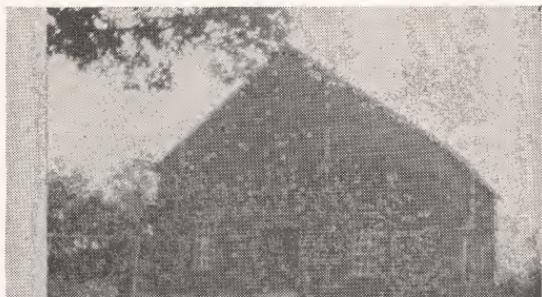
1. Old Pine, 1942

2. Harman

3. Beaver Run, 1939

4. Onego, 1942

5. White Pine, 1942



2



4



3



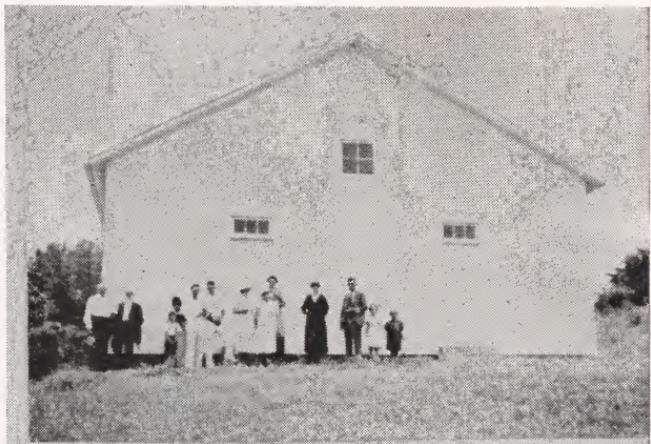
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1. Tear Coat

2. Jordan Run, 1925

3. Capon Chapel,  
1938

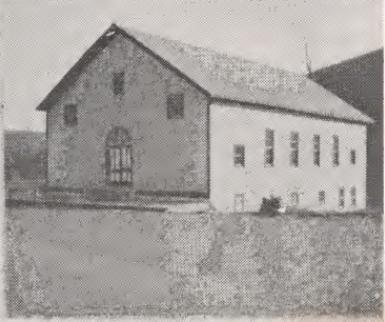
4. Maple Spring,  
1939



2



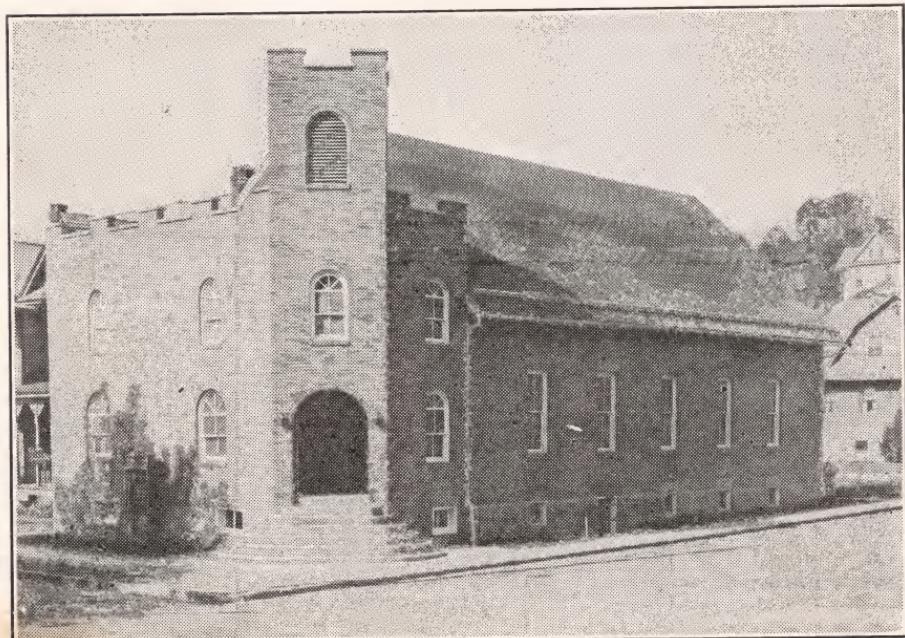
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4



PARSONAGE, SANDY CREEK CONGREGATION



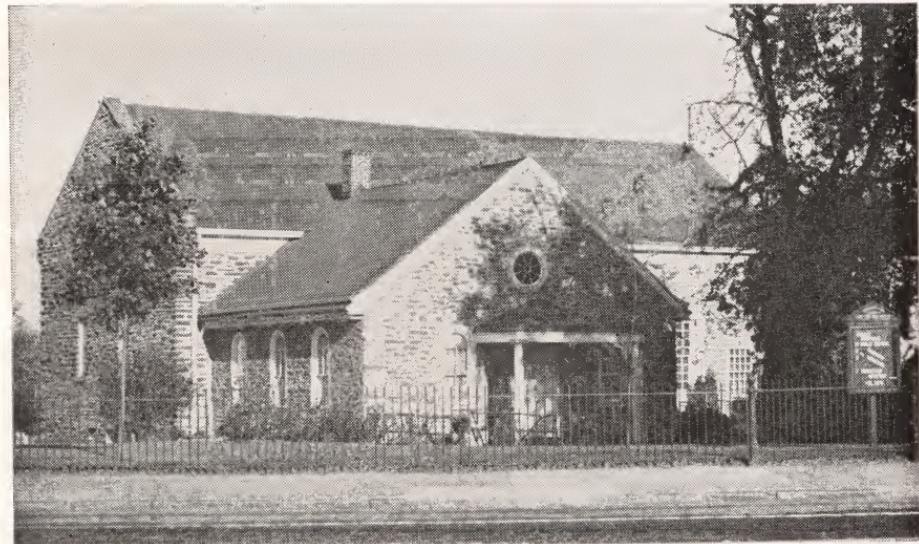
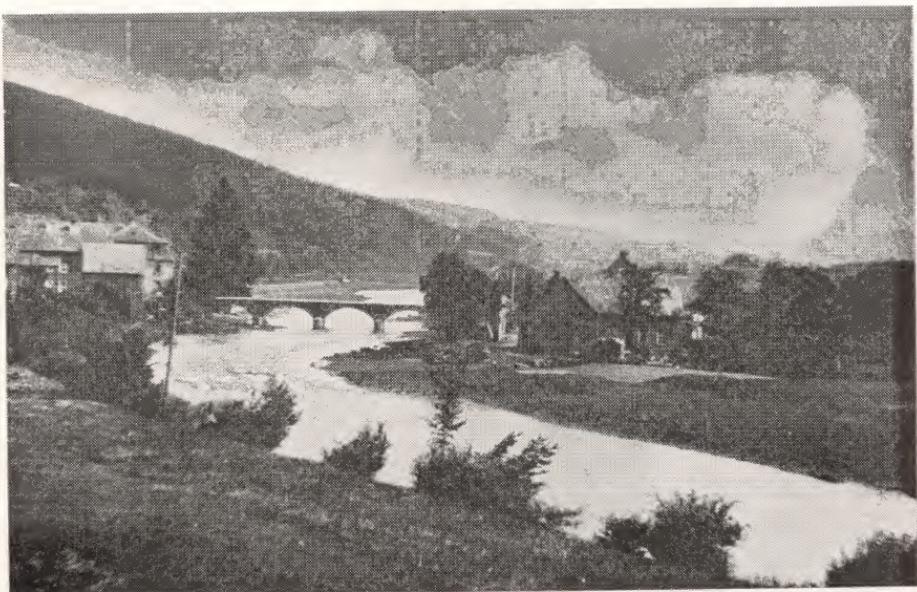
KEYSER CHURCH



SALEM CHURCH, SANDY CREEK CONGREGATION



WILEY FORD CHURCH



ABOVE: The village of Schwarzenau in Wittgenstein. At or near this spot on the banks of the Eder River the first baptisms took place in 1708. Photo by H. Spenser Minnich in 1924. BELOW: The mother church at 6613 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia. Property of the brotherhood by action of Conference in 1943. Photo supplied by B. F. Waltz.



2

1. Petersburg, 1939
2. Sunnyside, 1938
3. White Dale, 1939
4. Bean Settlement, 1939
5. Wolford Church  
(Red Creek)
6. Glade View, 1938



3



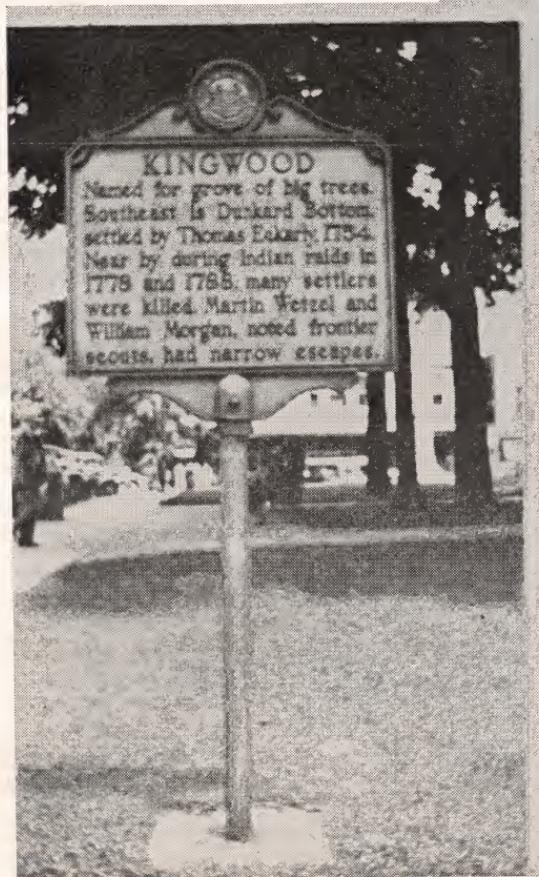
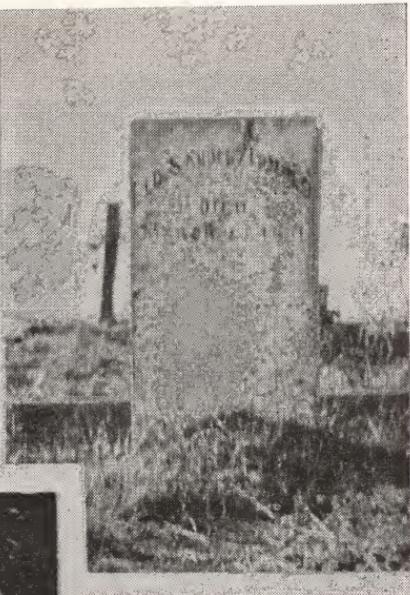
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6



Old home of Widow Cooper. The first love feast was held here.



Above

Marker at grave of Elder S. A. Arnold near Beaver Run.

Left

Marker for Dunkard Bottom settled by Eckerlins (Eckarlys). See page 21ff.



5

1. Locust Grove, 1938. 2. Orphans' home, 1939. 3. Old Furnace, 1939  
4. Brick. 5. Bethel

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CONGREGATIONS

#### ALLEGHENY

*Pioneer ministers:* John Kline, Thomas Clark, Sr., Thomas Clark, Jr., William George, William Michaels, Sam Fike, Aaron Fike, Moses Fike, John T. Cosner, and others.

*Present ministers:* Henry Cosner, Zina Cosner, Earl Cosner.

*Preaching places:* Locust Grove, ten miles east of Gormania; Allegheny, near Bismarck; Pisgah, three miles east of Hartmansville.

*Date of organization:* 1868.

*Boundary line:* Beginning at the Fairfax Stone, the headwaters of the Potomac River, the line runs downward with said river to the Mineral County line, thence eastward with the Mineral-Grant county line to the top of Allegheny Mountain, thence southward with top of said mountain (though some of the members living near Highway No. 50, east of the top of the mountain, belong to the Allegheny congregation) to the Tucker County line, thence westward with the Tucker-Grant county line to the Fairfax Stone, the line returns to the starting point.

It is said that the first preaching in the congregation was done by Thomas Clark, Sr., who resided in the old Looney Creek congregation, now Greenland. Bro. Clark was born in 1786, installed into the ministry in 1830, ordained to the eldership on May 21, 1849, by Elder John Kline,<sup>1</sup> preached in this congregation in 1848, and died in 1869. Of course this territory was then still a part of the Greenland congregation.

Thomas Clark, Jr., a nephew of Bro. Clark, Sr., lived on the hill east of Bayard and owned most of the land there on that side of the river. The homes of both of these Clarks were often visited by Bro. Kline. On various occasions Bro. Kline left his horse at Bayard with Bro. Clark, while he made a train journey from Oakland, Bro. Clark going with him to Oakland and then bringing his horse back to his home.

Bro. Kline often preached at the home of Andy Cosner, near

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<sup>1</sup> Funk, Benjamin, *Life of John Kline*. Page 261.

Bismarck. William George and William Michaels were also early preachers there. Bro. Michaels was not so very fluent, but was very good of heart. Bro. George died of cancer. Martin Cosner was elder-in-charge while this congregation was still in the bounds of Greenland. After the congregation was divided from the mother congregation in 1868, Bro. Sam Fike was chosen as the first elder-in-charge.

The first preaching was done in the homes of members, and then later in schoolhouses. Bro. Fike often preached in the Little Creek school. Other preaching places were the Hendrickson and Lone Star schools and the Rehobeth, Pisgah, and Pine Grove churches. Communion meetings were first held in Jake Aaronhalt's barn.

On Monday, August 25, 1856, Bro. Kline arrived at the Clark home near Bayard and spent the night there. The next day he had a meeting and after the meeting James Abernathy and his wife were baptized. Bro. Abernathy lived near what is now the Fairview church in Western Maryland and he was later promoted to the ministry and became a leader in the Fairview congregation. Bro. Kline's last visit was made to this congregation in 1864. On May 9 of that year, by previous arrangement, he spent the night at Andrew Cosner's, where he had services. The next night was spent fifteen miles farther on, at the home of Thomas Clark. The next day he went to Oakland, where he took the train for the Annual Conference in Ohio.

Among the first members were Andy Cosner, Ad Cosner, J. T. Cosner (minister), Sol Cosner, Ben Cosner, and others. David Cosner came from Germany, having been born there in 1776. To him were born Sam, 1818; Eliza, 1820; Jesse, 1821; Andrew, previously mentioned, 1823; Jonathan, 1825; Christina, 1827; Joseph, 1828; Christian, 1832; Jacob, 1833; Adam, 1835; Margaret, 1830; Catherina, 1836; David, 1838; John Tyler (later a minister), 1840; Archibald, 1841; Wesley, 1843. All were members of the church but Christian and Jesse. All joined very young.

Job Cosner, son of John Tyler Cosner, was one of the first Sunday-school workers, beginning about 1890, schools being held in the old Allegheny church and the Accident school. However, Ed Porter Idleman was the first Sunday-school superintendent, though a Methodist. He was followed by Dan Cosner, who in turn was followed by Job Cosner. Earl Cosner held one

of the first revivals at the Lone Star school, his first revival. He was much discouraged at first, having no help, but held out, and there were seventeen conversions in the two-week period.

The old Allegheny church was built in 1883 or 1884, the first church in the congregation. It was dedicated by D. B. Arnold. The lumber was hand-hewn and dried at a kiln near by. The Locust Grove church was built in 1914 and dedicated on October 10 by Emra T. Fike. Both churches are still in use, though the latter is the more centrally located.

The ministers of the congregation have been: J. T. Cosner, born 1840, elected 1875, ordained 1882; W. F. Nine, elected 1881, ordained 1899; Raphael Baker, elected 1885, ordained 1899; W. H. Cosner, elected 1895, ordained in the Fairview congregation; Garfield Nine, elected 1903, ordained in California; Newton Cosner, elected September 21, 1913; Earl Cosner, elected September 21, 1913; Henry Cosner; Zina Cosner.

#### BEAN SETTLEMENT

*Pioneer ministers:* Jacob Wine and others from Virginia, Daniel B. Arnold, Peter Arnold, George S. Arnold, Solomon Biser, A. W. Arnold, B. W. Smith, Joseph Arnold, W. L. Riggelman.

*Present minister:* M. L. Riggelman.

*Preaching place:* Bean Settlement church, four miles west of Rockoak.

*Date of organization:* 1876.

*Boundary line* (as given by M. L. Riggelman): Beginning at a point on top of Branch Mountain about ten miles east of Moorefield, where Route 23 crosses said mountain, it follows Route 23 to Needmore (same as line between First West Virginia and Northern Virginia) or to south end of Short Mountain, crossing North River to intersection with the Tear Coat congregation about parallel with Ford Hill, thence northwest to Branch Mountain to about headwaters of Grassy Lick River, thence with said Branch Mountain southwest back to starting point at State Route 23.

There seems to have been no preaching by the Brethren here until after the Civil War when Jacob Wine, Abe Neff, Sam Meyers, — Trostle and others from Virginia began to conduct services here. The first preaching was done in schoolhouses. The

Luxemburg, Buckley, and Markwood schools were used. Likely there were no members here when the Brethren did their first preaching, but soon some moved in or were baptized here. Some of those charter members were: George O. Bowman, whose grandparents came here from Tuckehoe, Virginia; John Evans, whose ancestry likely came from Hampshire County; and Peter Bean, whose ancestry came from Frederick County, Maryland.

This must have been a fertile field for Dunkerism for within a few years after the first preaching the church was built, 1876. Philip Snarr was the chief carpenter in the building, with Thomas Constable assisting. The planing was all done by hand on a lot just across the road from the church. The pulpit was then on the west side, with two entrances on the east side. It was remodeled about 1897, the pulpit moved to the back end, and one door made in front, as at present. Likely Jacob Wine and D. B. Arnold preached the dedication sermons in 1876.

The following is a copy of the original deed, Deed Book 30, page 243:

Philip Walker and H. H. Riggelman to German Baptists or so called Dunkers, "Beginning at—" [Dated 1873 for lot on which church now stands.]

Deed No. 2, dated 1878, Deed Book 32, page 277, Nathanael Walker and wife to Committee and trustees, Tunker Church, North River; Peter Bean, Wm. H. Bean, and John Evans. [This lot now used for parking ground south side of the road.]

The Bean ancestry came about 1760 to this country and settled in Frederick County, Maryland. Before 1794 they moved "to the virgin forest of the next state and established what is known as Bean Settlement on the North River, near Inkerman." The word *bean* in Scotland, whence these settlers came, means fair and is often used to describe one of fair complexion. The Riggelmans came from Germany and landed at Jamestown, Virginia. Being dissatisfied with the low altitude they soon came on up to Rockingham County, Virginia, and then later to Hardy County. Other settlers were from England and Ireland. The meaning of *Fabius*, name of a near-by post office, in Latin is bean.

For a long time Solomon Biser, D. B. Arnold, and George S. Arnold came over here from Beaver Run every other Sunday, alternating, for preaching services. Up until the beginning of the eldership of Bro. W. L. Riggelman in 1912 the Beaver Run

congregation handled this place as a mission point, with George S. Arnold and others as elder. Bro. W. L. Riggleman served as elder from 1912 to 1930, and he was followed by Brethren B. W. Smith, A. S. Arnold, and M. L. Riggleman. James Peer seems to have been the very active originator of and leader in the Sunday school here, beginning about 1883.

The following is taken from the files of Elder George S. Arnold:

I think it was about the year 1870 when our older ministers began to take on new impetus, and became more active in their church work than hitherto they had been.

The Bean Settlement lay 30 miles south of Beaver Run and mostly in Hardy County. In taking up work in new fields our Brethren found it to be an excellent place to preach the Gospel, the whole Gospel. A fine class of people dwelt here: honest, industrious, and truthful, of a common kind, none rich and none too poor to have a fraternal feeling extant among them: Read Acts 15: 13. It was true to the name Bean Settlement, but the Beans were in the majority, that's all.

Others were Garrett, Hawse, Combs, Davidson, Hoke, Walker, Starkey, Buckley, and many others.

Elder John Wine of Flat Rock Congregation in Va. had already been doing some preaching in this section of the county. For some time the preaching was done in school houses and these were mostly crowded, so finally the Brethren and friends decided to build a commodious church house, and so did, near what is called Rockoak, on North River, and near the line between Hardy and Hampshire Counties, but in Hardy County about the year 1872. (1876).

At the dedication of the church Elder Jacob Wine presented the church with a suitable Bible for pulpit use and it still occupies its place as a Monitor.

The older Brethren traveled by twos, usually making a trip in two days, but often from Saturday till Monday noon or longer. This was back in the days when saddle pockets were in common use. Then Monday morning brought its work. When prayer was over, and breakfast past, the saddle pockets were brought into service, grain in one side for the horse and dinner in the other side for the preacher, as it was considered too far to ride home without some refreshment and rest.

The Brethren usually had three appointments each trip: one Saturday P. M. and two on Sunday, and a trip each month, usually the fourth Sat., Sun. and Mon., but as time advanced younger Brethren took up the work and new ideas were introduced.

#### A Look Ahead

A change was made in the church, the pulpit was built in the end of the church, a very good change.

D. B. Arnold was one of the most zealous and active workers. In justice to his memory, I believe he did more to encourage the church here (Beaver Run) than any other of the ministers. Geo. S. Arnold served the church for many years as Elder and pastor, and in still later years the leadership of the church has been in the hands of Elder W. L. Riggleman, and still later years M. L. Riggleman serves the church as elder and pastor.

The church has retained its identity with the Church of the Brethren as of yore, including attendance at District Meetings, being always represented by delegates. In justice to the congregation, I wish to say they have ever been ready and in line for work with the general church, and have most faithfully retained their identity as of yore.

Geo. S. Arnold.

In recent years they have been struggling with the problem of a minister and pastor. Bro. M. L. Riggleman has returned and again serves them as pastor.

#### BEAVER RUN

*Pioneer ministers:* Elder Samuel Arnold (died 1831), Joseph Arnold, D. B. Arnold, Dr. Nicholas Leatherman, Solomon Biser, George S. Arnold, William George, Peter Arnold, Isaac Leatherman, M. M. Biser, James Long, B. W. Smith, N. H. Kelly, Jennie Click, J. B. Leatherman, Detrick Leatherman, Daniel Leatherman.

*Present ministers:* B. W. Smith, Amos Holsinger, Curtis Miller, Sloane Staggs, Robert Hoover (pastor).

*Preaching place:* Church on Beaver Run Road, three miles east of Burlington.

*Date of organization:* About 1785.

*Boundary line:* This was taken from the 1879 minutes of the Beaver Run church: "Decided on a line between Beaver Run Church and Pine Church, the line to commence at Lions mill, running across the mountain through Smacktown Gap, thence down the ridge east of Joshua Rinkers and Edward Whitemans, crossing Mill Creek above Elijahs Highs, thence up Sandy Hollow through the land of Harriet Highs, same course continued to the County Line, thence with a straight line to Pearce's Mill, thence with top of Furnace Mountain to Grant County Line."

The following boundary was given by B. W. Smith for the entire congregation: "Beginning on the South Branch of the Potomac at the Magisterial District line between Cabin Run and

Frankfort Districts and running in a direct westerly direction with said line to top of Knobley Mountain, thence with top of said mountain south westerly to a point south of U. S. Route 50, thence east to [same line as that dividing Beaver Run and Pine churches, described above] the South Branch of the Potomac, thence the line runs downward with said river to starting point."

Beaver Run has the distinction of being the oldest continuous organization of the Church of the Brethren in West Virginia, though the Powers had an active, thriving church somewhat earlier on the South Branch in Hardy County. She also has the distinction of being a mother of churches. From her territory and fathered by her ministers came the following congregations: White Pine, Greenland, Knobley, Old Furnace, Bethel, Sunnyside. Also Bean Settlement, Capon Chapel, Wiley Ford, Tear Coat, Keyser, and others have either been carved out of her original territory or been fathered by her ministry, or both.

This congregation had its beginning with the coming to this community of the Leathermans from near Hagerstown, Maryland, in 1784, and the Arnolds from near Frederick, Maryland, in about 1785.

Daniel Leatherman was born in Germany in 1710, moved to America in 1730, and to Maryland in 1757. He is the founder of the Church of the Brethren in Maryland. His son, Nicholas Leatherman, a minister, and his wife, with a small child, Abraham, moved to Patterson Creek, now between Headsville and Burlington, in 1784. Abraham is buried in the Biser cemetery.

In an unbroken line these Leathermans have held membership in the Church of the Brethren in West Virginia and Maryland now for well over two hundred years. Daniel's full and interesting biography is given in the History of the Church of the Brethren in Maryland, by J. M. Henry. He was a contemporary of the great early church leaders: Alexander Mack, Christopher Sower, Jacob Danner, and others.

We are interested in him in West Virginia for at least two reasons. First, because he was sent by the Big Meeting (Annual Meeting) held at Big Conewago, Pennsylvania, in 1785 to the Brethren in the South Branch Valley on the matter of carnal warfare and the swearing of oaths. (See page 30.) He was therefore one of the very first ministers of the Church of the Brethren to set foot in West Virginia, though the Powers must

have had a considerable congregation of Brethren here by 1785. Daniel died in January 1798, but he left a long line of faithful followers of the Christ and ministers of the Church of the Brethren and other denominations, who have served in the fields of West Virginia and elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>

This is another reason for our interest in him. He had a grandson, Daniel, born 1865, who is buried in the Leatherman cemetery on Patterson Creek, one mile south of Headsville. He was also a Brethren minister. These Leathermans and the Arnolds, whose history is hereafter recorded, were the builders of the church, with other helpers being added.

Their first services were held in the private homes, many of which were built large, with removable partitions, for accommodating services. The old Daniel Arnold home, which was used for love feasts and preaching, stood across the road westward from the present church. It is no longer standing. The old Cheshire house, Zachariah Arnold's home then, which was similarly used, is still standing. John Kline conducted services in these houses.

Later when they had the church house the ministers preached at the Beaver Run house on the first Sunday. All would try to be present. Then on the other Sundays of the month they would scatter out to other preaching points, schoolhouses, homes, or other churches. Some of the places where they regularly conducted services were: Brick church, Bean Settlement, Old Furnace, Welton school, Harness Run, Red Star school, Grove school, Page school. The faithful members also often went to those points to worship on Sunday, often traveling ten to twelve miles one way.

Beaver Run in 1897 sent the query to district meeting which resulted in the beginning of the ministerial meeting, independent of district meeting.

Here follows the history of the congregation written by a committee of the church, inserted here by their kind permission.

Beaver Run has the distinction of being the oldest congregation in the First District of West Virginia. It is about a half century older than Sandy Creek, which was the next organized work. The congregation here had its beginning in a group of members who moved here from Frederick County, Maryland, and settled on farms in this valley. About the year 1785 the

<sup>2</sup>Leatherman, Rev. I. John, *All Leatherman Kin History*. 1940.

following Arnolds moved from Frederick County, Maryland, to Manor Land, Hampshire County, Virginia, which is now Beaver Run, West Virginia: Elder Samuel, Elder Daniel, Deacon Zachariah, and two sisters, Betsy and Mollie. They were all members of the church and this was the beginning of the present Beaver Run congregation.

It is probable that the work of the church was started at the time the Arnolds located here with Sam and Dan as elders and Zachariah as deacon. Nothing very definite is known concerning the manner in which the work was carried on from the time of its beginning until the building of the first meeting house in 1834. It is understood, however, that the home of Daniel Arnold was built to accommodate meetings and love feasts held by the brethren before a church was built. The site of the Daniel Arnold home was just northwest of the present church across Beaver Run on the knoll which is now used as farming land, and is the possession of Oswald Rogers. It is believed that the homes of Samuel and Zachariah were used for meeting purposes in these early years.

This congregation was the first one organized in the state of Virginia west of the Shenandoah Valley. Its territory was practically without boundary. From this original territory came several divisions with many congregations existing today where formerly there was but one. The congregations of Sandy Creek, Greenland, Eglon, Tear Coat, Keyser, and all others now existing came from this first territory.

The growth and the expansion of the church during these early days seems to have been the result of the work of these home brethren and of those passing through. Among those from the outside who had much to do with the work was Elder John Kline, from the Shenandoah Valley. His work began about the same time as the building of the old log meeting house.

The building of the first church must have been a happy event in the life of this community. Few of the circumstances surrounding its construction are known, but an attempt will be made to give a brief account here. The ground where the present church stands served as the site for the old log building, perhaps 40 by 70 ft., and was deeded to Joseph Arnold, Solomon Arnold, and James Long, Nov. 15, 1834, for the use of what was then known as the Tunker Society of Hampshire County, Virginia, as a place of public worship, meetinghouse, and graveyard. The grounds comprised about three-fourths of an acre as given by the original deed. It is interesting to notice that the above named individuals to whom the deed was made did not constitute a board of trustees but simply a committee or group of individuals. It must be remembered that at this time what is now West Virginia was still a part of Virginia and that the Hampshire County mentioned was in Virginia. Later it became a county in the new state of West Virginia. In 1866 Mineral County was formed from Hampshire County; thus the seeming

paradox of this site being located in two different states and two different counties is explained.

The first church house stood on the exact spot where the present brick structure stands and was made of hewn logs. None of the details of the building operations can be given, since there have been no records found that contain anything about the actual work. It is pretty certain that the first building was not arranged to care for the love feasts, at least for some years after its construction. Elder John Kline in his diary refers to attending and holding love feasts in the various homes of the community several times after the date of the building of the church. From the book entitled *The Life of John Kline* the following is copied.

Saturday, September 12, 1835. He arrived at Abbey Arnold's, Hampshire County, Virginia. (Later West Virginia.) On the thirteenth he attended a love feast at Daniel Arnold's nearby, and reports a very joyful meeting with the Brethren whom he had not seen for a time.

Monday, September 14, 1835. He took leave of the Brethren in Hampshire County, and directed his course through Maryland into Pennsylvania; and on Friday, September 18, he crossed the Ohio river, two and one half miles below Acreton. He was ferried across on a flatboat. This incident seems to substantiate the belief that the old church did not accommodate love feasts at its first construction. It is said that the building occupied the same relative position as the present one, with the doors facing south, but with the benches facing in the opposite direction. The congregation thus had their backs turned to incoming people. It was decided when the new church was built to reverse the arrangement and have the congregation to face the doors since they would be able to see the late comers without turning around in their seats or noticeably taking their attention from the preacher. The present arrangement is a compromise between the two previous arrangements.

Since little can be found on the period from the building of the first church until the time of the new building, a few extracts are taken from *The Life of John Kline* to further give an idea of the influence he had on the work in this region and of some incidents in the life of this church.

Wednesday, September 21, 1843. Benjamin Bowman and I start very early to Hampshire County, Virginia. We get dinner at Rorabaugh's and reach Moorefield by night, after a ride on horseback of forty-seven miles.

Thursday, September 22, 1843. Go to David Vanmeter's [near Moorefield] for breakfast; reach Abbey Arnold's just after the first meeting. We have delightful weather, good order in the house and a pleasant meeting.

Friday, September 23, 1843. Meeting again. Revelation 3 is read. Stay at David Arnold's all night.

Saturday, September 24, 1843. Go to Joseph Arnold's and in

the afternoon to Joseph Leatherman's, where we have night meeting. I speak on Luke 24: 48.

Sunday, September 25, 1843. Attend love feast at Solomon Michael's. Revelation 3 is read.

Monday, September 26, 1843. Homeward through Petersburg; dine at Isaac Shobe's [south of Petersburg]; then to night meeting at Sister Chloria Judy's [between Petersburg and Franklin]. We speak on Matthew 11. Stay all night.

Tuesday, September 27, 1843. Cross the South Fork Mountain over to Jacob Warnstaff's, where we have an afternoon meeting. Speak on Luke 28.

Wednesday, September 28, 1843. We both get home.

Two years later we find Brother Kline in this congregation again, as shown by these entries in his diary.

Monday, October 20, 1845. Meeting at Solomon Michael's, where we stay all night.

Tuesday, October 21, 1845. Meeting at Joseph Arnold's [south of Burlington], on Patterson's Creek, in Hampshire County, Virginia. I spoke today on 2 Timothy 1: 13.

The Joseph Arnold referred to in the above entry from the diary of John Kline was the grandfather of Silas Arnold who now lives on Patterson Creek. Joseph Arnold was the father of Peter Arnold, known to many personally.

Again in 1848 Brother Kline enters in his diary a few more references to his early work here. These are taken from one of his extended trips.

Wednesday, June 21, 1848. Stay fiftieth night at Brother Daniel Arnold's in Hampshire County, Virginia.

Thursday, June 22, 1848. Dine at Brother Zachariah Arnold's and stay fifty first night in Moorefield, Hardy County, Virginia.

In 1851 Brother Kline started on another journey to Hardy and Hampshire Counties. He held a night meeting at James Stump's in Hardy; preached the funeral sermon of Brother Solomon Arnold; held a union meeting at Brother Benjamin Leatherman's; attended morning meeting on Saturday, November 15, at the meetinghouse; and held night service at Joseph Arnold's. 1858 records that Brother Kline again visited the northwestern counties of Virginia holding meetings daily. They visit Nicholas Leatherman's, John Leatherman's, and Samuel Arnold's, in Hampshire County, Virginia.

Practically every year his diary makes some reference to his being in this section. Many times he rode from two to nearly five thousand miles during one year on his faithful Nell. He records in 1863, "I have traveled 4,263 miles, all on horseback." He was riding Nell when he was fatally shot while returning from the blacksmith shop where he had taken her to be shod. This was during the war between the states and Brother Kline knew that he was being watched. On one occasion he said, "I

am threatened; they may take my life; but I do not fear them; they can only kill my body."

It has seemed fitting that these references to the work and influence of Brother Kline be included here. It is hoped that the purpose of their inclusion is understood by all who read this.

#### The Present Building

The year 1876 found the members of the Beaver Run Congregation anxious for a new building. Consequently, the old log building was torn away to make ready for the present one. Many of the logs in the old house ran the full length of the building and faced 15 inches. It has been suggested that they were significant of the sturdiness and strength of the people who had been worshipping within those walls. The old logs were sold at auction and many of them became beams for bridges. Some were purchased by Peter Biser and used in building the porch to his house now owned by E. B. Staggs. One of them was put into use as a foot log across Beaver Run on the Bailey place where it served children going to school, church, and the community store. Still others were to be kept as relics.

One of the tables used in the old log building was also used in the present church until 1919. It was then sold at public auction to J. B. Rogers who uses it as a table for family reunions. It is constructed without the use of nails, being of pin and mortise construction.

When this site was ready, brick were brought from the burning grounds on the late Dan Arnold place, now owned by A. S. A. Holsinger. The kiln was located near the road on the knoll between the house and the farm of G. H. McDonald. The work of supervising the building was in the hands of a committee. The laying of the brick is thought to have been done by contract, as was also the burning.

Men by the names of Keller, Sheetz, and Kibler worked as bricklayers. It is said these same workmen laid the brick in the Abner Bane home on Patterson's Creek and the late John W. Leatherman home on Beaver Run during the same year of the building of the church. Among the carpenters were Adam Popkins, Winchester, Va., Gus Clinedinst, Taylor Arnold, Will Flory, Andy Gladden, George T. Leatherman, and Edward Bailey. All of the flooring, window frames, sash, benches, tables, and finish materials were made right on the grounds.

Serving as brick carriers were M. M. Biser, Isaac Shipe, and Dave Whiteman. Andy Whiteman was mud-mixer and Joe Moyers acted as water carrier. The roofing was put on by Taylor Arnold and Daniel B. Arnold, the latter being agent for same. The original roof is still in use and in good shape after 63 years of service.

The list of ministers at the time of this building included Joseph Arnold, Solomon Biser, Daniel B. Arnold, Peter Arnold, William George, and Nicholas Leatherman.

In 1897, three years after the building of the present church, the grounds were enlarged as shown by a deed given by Benjamin S. Leatherman and wife to the trustees of the Beaver Run Church.

A few facts concerning the division of the congregation are given here: On October 4, 1879, the council agreed to a line between the Beaver Run Congregation and the Pine Church. A line between the Beaver Run Congregation and the Greenland Congregation was established March 1 of that same year. Old Furnace became a separate congregation in 1914.

Other minutes were found which showed that Peter Arnold, George S. Arnold, and Isaac W. Leatherman were advanced to the second degree of the ministry in 1879. Brother George S. Arnold was in the second degree of the ministry 57 years [and elder for forty-five years]. Sister Lydia Arnold was installed in the second degree as a minister's wife in 1884.

In 1919 the present church was remodeled. A partition was placed across the northwestern end forming Sunday School rooms and making possible the present arrangement of seating. The church has had the use of electric lights for 12 years.

#### Sidelights

To give an idea of the number of people who attended the love feasts sixty years ago the following list of supplies is taken from an old minute book: 59 lbs. butter, 95 loaves bread, 100 lbs. meat, 8 gal. applebutter, 8 lbs. coffee. One year the bread numbered 141 loaves.

On another occasion permission was given by the council to sell horse feed, bread, meatpies, and cakes at the time of communion. Another minute said, "Decided the saddle house shall not be used for huckstering." This meant at communion time. It must be borne in mind that people came for two or three days' stay at these early communions. Sale of provisions was quite necessary.

The first Sunday School was organized about the year 1880.

The first Superintendent was Dick Leatherman. Some of the early teachers were: Isaac W. Leatherman, Janie Bailey, John R. Leatherman.

Brother E. W. Bailey has the honor of serving 20 years as Superintendent of the Sunday School at Beaver Run.

Written September 1, 1939, for the first annual homecoming of the Beaver Run Church.

#### Committee

A. S. A. Holsinger,  
E. W. Bailey,  
J. Curtis Miller.

In 1944 Bro. Robert Hoover was secured to serve as pastor jointly the Beaver Run, Knobley and Sunnyside churches.

### BETHEL

*Pioneer ministers:* Dr. Nicholas Leatherman, George S. Arnold, James Fleming, B. W. Smith.

*Present ministers:* None resident.

*Preaching place:* Bethel, three miles west of Old Fields.

*Date of organization:* November 9, 1940.

*Boundary line:* Beginning on the east side of Petersburg, West Virginia, on the South Branch of the Potomac at the point of its crossing the boundary line between Hardy County and Grant County the line runs thence in an easterly direction with the boundary line between the First District of West Virginia and the Northern District of Virginia to the top of South Branch Mountain (this line runs "thence with the river to Moorefield and to the bridge above Old Fields; thence with the Cunningham across the mountain); thence with top of said mountain to the second high knob, thence westerly in a direct line to U. S. Route 220 and the Haggarty Road, thence with the Haggarty Road to the Mountain View schoolhouse, thence westerly to a point where the three counties of Hardy, Mineral and Grant meet on top of Patterson Creek Mountain, thence with the top of said mountain southwesterly to the starting point on the South Branch of the Potomac.

Dr. Nicholas Leatherman was the first to preach in this congregation. He began preaching at Thrasher Springs, near Bethel, and there he and John M. Leatherman worked faithfully for more than twenty years, preaching in the grove in summer and in the school in winter. George S. Arnold, D. B. Arnold, and James Fleming were other ministers who helped. George S. Arnold held the first revival and baptized the first group of converts, so far as is known. Some of these were Lillie Sions, Maggie Sions, Kate Sions, Gertie Smith Sions, and Nancy Veach.

This was before 1896. By this time the work had grown to such proportions that a building was needed. This church was built and Elder Jonas Fike preached the dedicatory sermon in 1896. Elijah Shoemaker furnished the money and the material for the building and is called the founder of the church. Later he got uneasy about getting his money back, became discouraged, and sold it to the Methodists. They held it for a number of years. Then when Elder A. S. Arnold and family moved here

the Methodist minister said to him, "Bro. Arnold, you folks ought to own this house. Your members have been supporting it more than the Methodists have and you have more members here." Bro. Arnold made investigation and took action resulting in the buying back of the house in about the year 1916 for the sum of \$200.00. During those years the Brethren and the Methodists had been working jointly in church and Sunday school, and some claim that the Methodists owned only a part share instead of all.

Since the passing away of Bro. Albert S. Arnold this congregation has been handicapped by not having a resident minister. But Brethren W. W. Bane, B. W. Smith, India Hockman, and others have been helping as much as possible. Some of the years from 1934-38 Bro. Raymond Martin served as pastor.

Feeling that their needs could best be met as a separate congregation, this group early in 1940 applied at a council at White Pine for the privilege to organize as a separate congregation. This request was granted with an almost unanimous decision. The movement was approved by the district conference of October 5, 1940, and on November 9, 1940, Elders Ray Showalter and Foster M. Bittinger representing the district ministerial board and Elders B. W. Smith and W. W. Bane representing adjoining elders met with the church at Bethel and helped with the new organization. B. W. Smith was elected the first elder of the congregation.

#### CAPON CHAPEL

*Pioneer ministers:* Abraham Miller, Isaac Miller, William Roby, Abraham Detrick, Peter Arnold, Benjamin Leatherman, B. W. Smith, David Merrill.

*Present ministers:* A. P. Bohrer, Bruce Shanholtz.

*Preaching places:* Capon Chapel, three miles west of Levels; Oak Grove, one mile south of Okonoko; Mountain Dale, three miles east of Paw Paw.

*Date of organization:* March 16, 1908.

*Boundary line:* Beginning at a point on the South Branch of the Potomac where the line of the magisterial districts of Cabin Run and Frankfort cross said river and running down said river to the Potomac River, the line continues down the Potomac River to a point east of Cacapon River, thence southwesterly with the top of Cacapon Mountain (Baker Mt.) to a point east of the

Forks of Capon, the line of the Tear Coat congregation, thence in a westerly line to the starting point on the South Branch of the Potomac.

According to the History of Hampshire County, by Maxwell and Swisher, about 1852 several families moved to the Levels from the Valley of Virginia. Abraham Miller, Isaac Miller, William Roby, and Abraham Detrick were ministers in the Church of the Brethren and preached in the vicinity for a while and then moved to the West.

The next preaching was likely done by Elder B. W. Smith, who preached the first sermon in the old Excelsior school, where Bro. A. P. Bohrer now lives. A few members from the Tear Coat congregation called for preaching and this was the start. He continued for five or six years and a number were added to the church. The first love feast was held in the Hopkins Lick school-house near where the Chapel church now stands. This was several years before the church was built.

The church was built at the Chapel during the summer of 1906 and was dedicated September 2 of the same year by Elder E. T. Fike, using as a text Psalm 122. The organization was effected by the mutual consent of the home congregation, Tear Coat, and the new congregation, Capon Chapel, in 1908. There are three prominent preaching points today and other places where preaching has been done. Peter Arnold and George S. Arnold also preached in the Excelsior school in the years after 1892. Through their ceaseless efforts and the help of Bro. Benjamin Leatherman the work on Little Capon was started and prospered and at the time of organization in 1908 there were fifty-six members, two deacons, and one minister, Bro. A. P. Bohrer. The name chosen for the congregation was Little Capon, but was changed to Capon Chapel in 1913.

There at the Chapel church Anthony Bohrer was baptized in 1904, elected to the deaconsip that fall, and at the spring council of 1905 was elected to the ministry by the unanimous consent of the church council, at which Elder Peter Arnold presided. Luther Shanholtz was elected to the ministry in 1902 and in his time did a great deal of good and a great amount of preaching. Beginning about 1928 charges of immorality by Bro. Shanholtz were being made, and the work suffered a decline. He was later disfellowshiped. Bro. Bohrer has labored faithfully in the serv-

ice. Though Bro. Peter Arnold was for a long time elder-in-charge, the work has been more or less under the guidance and support of the district mission board.

The work at the Brights Hollow school began about 1908 in the old building and has continued ever since, changing to the new school when it was built. Some preaching was done about this time and prior to it by the Progressive Brethren, but none is now being done by them.

The following information was supplied by Sister Delcie Shanholtz relative to the work at Brights Hollow, in about her own words.

The first members of the church were a family of three of the name of Showalter, who came from Pennsylvania. There was a preacher from Pennsylvania who preached at Brights Hollow about once a month and then his health failed and he quit coming. Then David and Nathanael Merrill came for a while. During their preaching John W. Whitacre and wife, their son and daughter and another daughter, who was my mother, were baptized. That made eight members.

There then followed a number of years with no preaching by the Brethren and they attended the Baptist and Methodist churches. For some members the light went dim, but some read the Bible and kept the light burning, still holding to the church that preached the whole gospel.

After some years B. W. Smith from the Tear Coat congregation preached once a month at a school seven or eight miles from us. When fourteen years old I told mother I wanted to join the church. She said she would ask father, who was a Baptist. He replied that I was not old enough. The church was very plain at that time and he was afraid I would not hold out as there were no other young people in it. He said, "Wait till you are a little older." I waited a little over a year and then joined, mother and I making the trip to the service that time. I have never been sorry for that trip and father and mother could say the same thing for father came into the church later at about the age of sixty-three and died faithful to the church at the age of eighty-nine.

I remember one hymn they often sang in those days, the chorus of which is

"Oh, the lights along the shore  
That never grow dim,  
Never grow dim;

"Oh, the souls that are aflame  
O'er the love of Jesus' name  
And they will guide us unto him."

At Mt. Dale there has been preaching since the spring of 1929, Brethren Luther Shanholz and George Yost being the first preachers there. About that time the Ed Nazzlerod family moved into the community and immediately began to work for church services. Largely through their efforts the present church was built in 1930, the building belonging to the Allegheny Orchard Company being conditioned by the members there. The Allens were the first members there. Sunday school was conducted there from 1929 to 1937, since which time they have been co-operating with the Paw Paw church. Preaching is being done irregularly but they need help very greatly.

During most of its history this congregation has been under the care of the district mission board, until about 1938 when they secured a summer pastor, Bro. Elmer Gleim. The work took on new life and interest. During this and the following years under the guidance of Elders Foster M. Bittinger and Vernon Shanholz some of the internal dissensions were smoothed out and the work looks forward again.

For a long time there had been urgent need of a church in the Brights Hollow community. During these years plans were made for it and with the help of Elder Vernon Shanholz it was brought to completion in 1941 with Bro. B. W. Smith preaching the dedicatory sermon. It was named the Oak Grove church, being located in a beautiful oak grove at the head of Brights Hollow.

#### EGLON

*Pioneers ministers:* Sam Arnold, Thomas Clark, Benjamin Beeghly, P. Musser, Samuel A. Fike, T. Musser, Aaron Fike, Samuel Pifer, Moses Fike, Dennis Weimer, James Liller, Jesse Hays, John Kline.

*Present ministers:* Ezra Fike (present elder-in-charge), E. T. Fike, Olonzo Fike, J. S. Fike, Dr. H. C. Miller, Lorenzo Fike, Wilma Weybright, W. L. Teets, Charles Vought, Galen Fike, Omar Simmons, D. B. Spaid, Norman Harsh, Ralph Martin.

*Date of organization:* 1855.

*Preaching places:* Maple Spring, one-half mile south of Eggon; Brookside, two miles east of Aurora; Glade View, nine miles south of Oakland; Gortner, four miles south of Oakland; Mackeysburg, two miles north of Hamilton; Sugarland, six miles west

of Thomas; Benbush, in Benbush; Mt. Grove, five miles north of Thomas.

*Boundary line:* Beginning at Rowlesburg the line runs up Cheat River to Parsons, thence up Dry Fork to the mouth of Blackwater River, thence up the Blackwater River to a point east of Thomas where said Blackwater leaves the Elkins branch of the Western Maryland Railroad, thence with said railway to the site of Fairfax, thence by an air-line to the Fairfax Stone, thence with the West Virginia-Maryland state line to the top of Backbone Mountain, thence with the top of said mountain to U. S. Highway No. 50, thence by an air-line to a point where the state line crosses the B. & O. Railroad near Hutton, thence by an air-line westerly to Amblersburg on the B. & O. Railroad, thence southwesterly with said railway to the starting point at Rowlesburg.

This congregation was once much larger, including all of the Fairview and part of the Pine Grove congregation in western Maryland.

The first settlers and founders of the German Settlement community, now the Eglon congregation, were Rev. John Stough, a Lutheran minister who settled at Mt. Carmel, near Aurora, in 1787, and his company. The next year Frederick Harsh came from Germany and settled on the east portion of the site of Aurora. August Christian Whitehair came to Union District in 1788 and in 1790 taught school at Carmel, the first in Union District and possibly the first in Preston County. His descendant, George Whitehair, was the first one to be baptized into the Church of the Brethren within the bounds of the Eglon congregation. He lived on the Sammy Fike farm, now the Jesse Harsh farm. George P. Heckert, a millwright, settled near Eglon in 1790. John Slaubaugh settled near Eglon on the Frederick Harsh farm in 1852 and Peter Fike located one and one-half mile south of Eglon in 1854. These were all of German descent and for that reason the congregation was known as the German Settlement congregation until 1919 when the district conference granted the privilege of changing the name to the Eglon congregation. Much preaching had been done in German in the past.

The first members living in the bounds of the congregation were James McKinney and his wife of Stemple Ridge, who were baptized at Lennox, West Virginia, by James Quinter. On March

18, 1854, Jeremiah Miller and family moved to Stemple Ridge. In April of the same year Sam A. Fike and wife moved to Egton on what is now the Jesse Harsh farm and in March Peter Fike and family located on the Vought farm. Thus by the close of 1854 the following members were within the bounds of the congregation: Peter Fike and wife, S. A. Fike and wife, Jeremiah Miller and wife, John Weimer and wife, James McKinney and wife. James Abernathy moved to near Wilson in 1854 and in 1858 was baptized by John Kline. Others soon moved in, among whom were Phineas Miller, Jacob Weimer, John Snyder, and David Fike. These with their holy lives formed a nucleus around which the church began to take root. Elder Benjamin Beeghly located near Aurora soon after Peter Fike but the exact date is not known. He was perhaps the first minister living here and probably held the first regular councils. He did much to organize and establish the church fully.

The first preaching was done here before 1831, which is the date of his death, by Elder Samuel Arnold, father-in-law of Peter Fike, Sr. As he was passing through on a preaching tour, he stopped at a tavern at Sunny Side, Maryland. When the landlord learned that he was a minister, he requested him to leave an appointment for his next trip. When the time came for the appointment a large crowd was present, having come to see the curiosity, a preacher with a beard, for beards were rare in those days. Next came Brethren James Quinter and Jonathan Kelso, of Maryland, who preached at West Union (Aurora), and baptized George Whitehair, the first person to be baptized in this congregation.

At the request of Peter Fike, Thomas Clark of Bayard began and kept a regular appointment, usually in the home of Bro. Fike. His were the first regular preaching appointments. As a result, in part at least, an election was soon held and the church was organized. On September 25, 1855, Elder John Kline and Martin Miller came to Peter Fiega's (Fike's) where they held a council meeting and "Samuel Fiega was elected speaker (minister) and Tobias Moser deacon." This would likely be rightly called the date of congregational organization at this place. On August 27, 1856, Bro. Kline had a "meeting at David Fiega's on the pike. Afternoon meeting at West Union (Aurora). Stay at Benjamin Beachley's (Beeghley)." Since Bro. Beeghley was

a minister before moving here there were now two resident ministers in the congregation. The next election was held in 1861 in an old spring house near the Accident schoolhouse and Aaron Fike, another son of Peter Fike and brother of Sam Fike, was elected along with Sam Pifer. Sam was physically alert, almost perfect as a Bible student and scholar. He was a great reasoner and an energetic missionary, a man of great power in the pulpit. He studied the Book and could interpret it. Aaron was a man of deep spiritual life and feeling. In later years he was so afflicted that he could not ride, so walked far and near preaching the Word. In 1863 another son, Moses, was elected and he was known as the orator and debater, never happier than when in an argument with someone, perhaps a minister, of another denomination. These men commanded great respect wherever they went. They were loyal to the church and to the Book. They endured persecution. Their membership was earnest and believed every word of the Book. They were living epistles.

The first protracted meeting, as a series of evangelistic meetings was then called, was held about 1862 at the old Accident schoolhouse by S. A. Fike and Aaron Fike. There were seven baptisms. The next one was held at the same place a few years later by the same brethren and as a result more than twenty were baptized in the creek near John Snyder's in Snyder Hollow, which about doubled the membership.

The country was yet native forest, virgin timber, and it took much hard labor to fell the trees, clear the land, and erect homes. Most of the members were poor and endured much hardship and persecution. On account of this the early men of the ministry and their families suffered much. They would spend many days and months on preaching tours and in preaching funerals. They traveled on horseback and received no remuneration for time or expense. They paid their own toll and bought their own grain, paying as high as three dollars a bushel for grain. Many times they ate cornbread and sour milk for a meal, traveled by lonely paths through dense forests, forded dangerous streams, endured freezing temperatures in wet clothing and preached in the evening to the simple mountain folk. But these people eagerly drank in the helpful words of these zealous preachers, delivered with great earnestness, burning messages of love. These men were great evangelists.

Often after services they would follow a rough winding path many miles to lodge in a log house with an old-fashioned fireplace. After a warm spiritual talk, the reading of a chapter and a prayer, they would retire for the night to a room where the wind whistled through the cracks and awaken next morning to find the bed covered with snow which had blown in during the night. They would arise, eat a meager meal, mount their faithful horses, and hurry on through the winter, or if in summer hurry home to help the needy families. Working early and late, studying next Sunday's text while following the plow or swinging an ax or grain cradle, they labored on. Of course much of the burden was carried by their faithful families.

Many of the congregations in the western end of the First District of West Virginia and also in the Second District, owe their existence to the tireless efforts of these faithful workers, especially to Elder Sam Fike as he at one time had charge of five congregations. Even to the present the ministers of the Eggon congregation have carried the eldership and the burdens of many surrounding congregations. Later ministers who did much of this work outside of the congregation were Jonas Fike, John Fike, Emra Fike, Ezra Fike, and others.

At first most of the preaching was from house to house and at the Accident school. But coming "from Brookside we pass over a low ridge and enter a gladelike basin where the well-kept farms and comfortable homes show an agricultural thrift and prosperity unsurpassed elsewhere in Preston. Eggon, four miles in this direction, was formerly called Maple Run and as it dates only from 1881 it has a very modern air." Thus Morton in his History of Preston County describes the locality where in 1865 was built the first church of the congregation. "It was made of planks. The seats had no backs on them, which made them very uncomfortable. This old house was 30 x 50 ft." (Heckert). In 1890 the present church was built, Elder Sam L. Sisler of Terra Alta being the head carpenter. This building is forty by seventy feet and stands about fifty feet southeast of where the old one stood. The following brethren were the building committee: T. S. Fike, Phineas Miller, and J. S. Arnold. The following were trustees: John S. Fike, S. K. Fike and A. R. Fike.

The name, Maple Spring, was given to the church because of a large splendid spring of water which came out from under a

large maple tree above the church. From 1932-34 further changes were made. When State Route W. 34 was graded the spring and all the large trees were destroyed. But the spring was later rebuilt and cemented over, and the water was piped to a fountain on the west side of the house. More maple trees were planted. A basement was placed under the whole house and Sunday-school rooms were placed in the back part of the building.

This church has from the first been interested in better church music and the first lessons were given by the Funks of Virginia. For many years a singing school was held nearly every year, with weekly or semimonthly singing at various points.

This congregation also has ever been zealous in Sunday-school work. There have been Sunday schools in the congregation nearly all the time since 1864. The first was organized at the old Accident schoolhouse in 1864, superintended at first by members of another denomination but soon passing under the direction of the Brethren with Peter Fike as superintendent. Since 1865 there has been Sunday school at the Maple Spring house nearly all of the time.

Since the beginning the work has flourished with a steady but gradual growth until now it is the only church of any denomination within a radius of several miles.

In 1884 or 1885 there was a heart-rending setback and split with twelve or fifteen members going with the Old Order Brethren.

But then in the early nineties came a period of great activity. Eight ministers were elected in twelve years. There was quite a growth in membership. Territory was divided with Western Maryland. Younger ministers were sent out while the older ones looked after the home work. Some kept ten appointments a month and traveled by horse one hundred thirty-five miles a month, without a penny of recompense. But those were great days and there was power. New churches were built.

The Brookside house was built in 1892 with Elder S. A. Sisler as carpenter. The following were the building committee: Tobias Fike, Washington Fike, C. Miller, Benjamin Schrock, and William Fresh. This house is twenty-four by thirty-six feet. In the same year a Sunday school was organized and has continued ever since.

The Glade View house was built in 1895 by Marcellus Wolfe and is twenty-six by thirty-four feet. The following committee served: Jeremiah Miller, S. F. Miller, Silas Snyder, Seymour Hamstead. They organized a Sunday school the same year. It has continued in a flourishing condition ever since.

The Sugarland house was built in 1896 by A. R. Fike and is twenty-four by thirty-six feet. Recently because of many members having moved away this church has had a struggle.

The Gortner house is owned in part by the Brethren, who conduct services there once a month.

The Mountain Grove house was built in 1924 and services have been conducted there ever since.

Other preaching places at present are Benbush and Mackeysille.

Likely Elder Benjamin Beeghly had charge of the congregation from its beginning in 1855 or 1856 to 1861. From 1861 to 1901 Elder Sam A. Fike had the charge. In 1865 Aaron Fike was ordained as assistant, which office he held until 1901. In 1901 Jonas Fike was given the charge.

This congregation has exercised an aggressive leadership in the First District of West Virginia. It has been missionary-minded in relation to both home and foreign missions. Many congregations of West Virginia owe their existence to this congregational leadership. From this congregation Ilda Bittinger Ziegler has gone to India, Desmond Bittinger to Africa, and Alva Harsh to China.

Women's work was organized in the congregation in 1921, with Mrs. Carrie King, Mrs. Etta Bittinger, and Mrs. Virgie Fike among the first officers. There are now four aid societies in the congregation: Eglon, Brookside, Gortner, and Glade View.

Within the limits of the congregation was also the orphanage owned and operated by the districts of First West Virginia, Western Maryland and Second West Virginia. This work resulted from a query from the Eglon congregation to district conference in 1919.

At the Memorial Grove at the orphanage were held also the inspirational conferences from about 1920 to 1937 which were the beginning of the work now at Camp Galilee since 1938.

## GREENLAND

*Pioneer ministers:* Thomas Clark, Michael Lyon, John Kline, Jacob Wine, William Michaels, William George, Dan Thomas, Jacob Thomas, Martin Cosner, and many others.

*Present ministers:* None.

*Preaching places:* Brick church, two miles west of Maysville; Oak Dale, five miles north of Scherr.

*Date of organization:* May 21, 1849, at the home of Solomon Michaels.

*Boundary line:* Beginning at the point on the top of Allegheny Mountain where the Mineral-Grant county line crosses the mountain, the congregational boundary line runs southwestward with top of said mountain to the road up the mountain from Brushy Ridge, thence down the mountain road easterly to Brushy Ridge, thence by air-line easterly to top of New Creek Mountain, thence northeasterly with top of said mountain to the point in Klines Gap where the Milroy-Union district line is reached, thence in an easterly direction, following the South Branch of Luneys (Lunice) Creek to Luneys Creek, thence following Luneys Creek in a southerly direction to where a bridge on the county road crosses said Luneys Creek, thence following said county road to the top of the hill known as Old Camp Grounds, thence from the Old Camp Grounds in a direct course east to a point on the top of Patterson Creek Mountain, thence northward with top of said mountain to a point directly east of Greenland Gap, thence west by air-line to Greenland Gap, thence northeasterly with top of New Creek Mountain to the Grant-Mineral boundary line, thence easterly with said line to the starting point on the top of Allegheny Mountain.

From the family history of the Idleman families comes the record of the first members of the Church of the Brethren in West Virginia whose descent can be traced to the present. Somewhere in Germany Elizabeth Bussard married a man of the name of Oberholtzer. These two joined the Church of the Brethren in Germany, and there a son was born to them. In the year 1740 this family decided to come to America. It must have been a hard voyage for both father and son died at sea. So alone without any earthly friends Sister Oberholtzer arrived. Upon arrival she sold herself into slavery for payment for the voyage. She was purchased by a man on the South Branch of the Potomac,

near Moorefield, for a period of three years. Because of her faithfulness, the kindness of her master, and the help of God she was set free after serving for only one and a half year.

She soon married John Stingly, and to this union "seven children were born. The youngest, William, born in 1764, married and settled in what is now the bounds of the Greenland congregation. We have the account of William Stingly traveling to Beaver Run in 1805 to be baptized by the Brethren. History has it that the Arnolds at Beaver Run were German and spoke the German language, and the Stinglys did not, so they could not understand each other. The Stinglys traveled east into Virginia sixty miles further, and found a Brother Schofield who performed the rite for them. Thus they became the nucleus around which clustered the beginnings of the Greenland congregation."<sup>3</sup>

There is a very interesting story connected with the conversion and baptism of William Stingly. In 1805 he became much concerned over his spiritual welfare and prayed much about it while at work. "While pondering over baptism as to the number of dips required, a dove alighted on his plow handle while he was sitting on the beam, and it bowed gracefully three times and then flew away. He at once unhitched his horses and drove over to the Arnolds at Beaver Run to be baptized."<sup>4</sup> William Stingly had one son and five daughters, and all five girls became members of the Church of the Brethren. One of them married Michael Lyon, who became the first elder of the Greenland congregation. She was the grandmother of Daniel Hays of sacred memory. From this center the Word was sounded far and near and the foundations laid for a number of congregations that later came into being. William Stingly is buried about one-half mile north of the Idleman place.

Of the early work and growth of the church, we learn that having no church house they first held services in the homes of the members. The home of Solomon Michaels, whose wife was a daughter of William Stingly, was a favorite meeting place, as were also William Stingly's and Jacob Cosner's. From the diary of Elder John Kline we have these notes of the time and places of some meetings:

Sept. 25, 1843, attended Love Feast at Solomon Michaels.

<sup>3</sup> *Idleman Family Records*, possessed by Ollie Idleman.

<sup>4</sup> From historical records possessed by Elder E. T. Fike.

Oct. 25, 1843, had a night meeting at Solomon Michaels, from there went to William Stingleys in the west part of Hardy Co. where we filled an appointment for preaching.

May 20, 1849, Meeting at Patch Church on Looney's (Lunice) Creek in Hardy County. . . . Dine at John Stingley's. Have night meeting at Jacob Cosner's.

May 21, 1849. Come to meeting at Solomon Michaels. Elections are held. Thomas Clark and Michael Lyon are established; William Michaels is elected speaker, William George and Thomas Lyon are elected Deacons.<sup>5</sup>

Two things from that quotation should be noted. With the election on May 21, 1849, the congregation had two elders and an additional minister, also two deacons, a rather substantial organization. Certainly then, if not before, the congregation was in an organized condition, and I have used that date as the beginning of the organized congregation. With those who would like to push the date of organization back still further, saying that Brethren Clark and Lyon were likely speaking ministers before, I have no quarrel. The evidence seems to point to this election as something unusual, something of the kind of a definite decision, a definite beginning. Therefore, I use this date as the date of the organization.

The second thing to be noted is that they, by 1849, had a church house. This church was built in what is known as The Ridges, close to the Elder Benjamin Roby place. A few scattered members of the church lived near this place. Among them were Mrs. Ben Roby and Mrs. James Parks, often mentioned by Bro. Kline. This church was at the same place where the school now is, about a mile north of Idleman's. It is on record that William Stingly, great-grandfather of Ollie Idleman, who lived near where Kessel now lives, furnished the land on which the house was built. And Hawk, who lived in the first house north, and some other families gave a small amount. It is likely that this house was to be used by all denominations. If this is the house referred to above in Kline's diary, it is likely the only time he ever preached in it. Mostly Bro. Kline preached at Michael's, rather than at the church. Kline's referring to this church as on Luney's Creek would point to this church. However, his geography may here be in error, as it sometimes is, though usually it is remarkably correct.

From old Bro. David M. Mooreland and others of the Alle-

<sup>5</sup> Funk, Benjamin, *Life of John Kline*.

gheny congregation comes the strong positive statement that the Patch's church was the church built at Scherr, then Greenland, on the lot given by Solomon Michaels, in the year 1850 or 1851. Some of those of Allegheny who told me about it attended church there. Bro. Moorland, now deceased, said, "I remember well how nice the church looked as it sat there on the bank. It was built of such nice and carefully hewn logs. I remember going in there, holding to my dear mother's apron. I remember [and here the tears streamed down over his cheeks] sitting by my mother on the hewn benches and hearing my mother's voice in song. I remember seeing Bro. John Kline get up and preach, and I can still hear his sweet, sincere voice." This to Bro. Moorland was Patch's church and is probably one of the only few churches preached in by Bro. Kline. It was likely about twenty-five feet by thirty feet in size. It stood where Kimmel's store is.

The following story of the burning of the church was given by Bro. Moorland and verified by others. "In April 1863 Confederates under Gen. Jones made a raid through the Greenland Gap section. There were from eighty to ninety Yankee soldiers about, who took shelter in the church. They were engaged in a battle which kept up till dark, when the Rebels burned the building. Gen. Wallace, in charge of the Yankees, said, 'Throw down your guns. I surrender to friends, not to you.' The church was later rebuilt, then deserted, then used as a store, which soon burned.

The following account of the burning of the church is given by Smucker:

Among the minor skirmishes and affairs which occurred during the latter part of April (1863) and the first week in May were several raids made by Rebel Cavalry under Imoden, Jenkins, Harper, and William E. Jones in Western Virginia, at Piedmont, Cranberry Summit, Oakland, Rowlesburg, Altemont, and other points on the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, intended to ascertain the feasibility of an advance of General Lee's Army upon Pittsburg, and a severe fight at Greenland Gap, a narrow pass in the Knobley mountains, Hardy County, where a little Union Force of seventy-five men withstood three attacks of a rebel force of fifteen hundred men, for more than two hours and were only driven from their position by the Rebels firing the building (a church) in which they had stationed themselves. The Union loss was two killed, and four wounded; the Rebel loss in killed and wounded, was over eighty, including one colonel and several line officers, being more than the whole Union force.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Smucker, S. M., *History of the Civil War in the U. S.*

A little more from Kline's diary will give us something of the atmosphere of the times. In 1853 he had a meeting at Greenland, likely a time when Bro. Moorland sat by his mother worshiping. A woman from Germany was baptized. He dined at Samuel Barbee's and spent the night at James Parks'. In 1859 he had another meeting at Greenland and spoke on the Great Supper. In 1862 he went west to the Annual Conference and on the evening of May 30, after traveling over rugged paths and through part of the army of Gen. Fremont, he and Bro. John Wine came to the home of Bro. Martin Cosner, who received them with joy and gladness. The next morning they came to the homes of Brethren Thomas Clark, Sr., and Thomas Clark, Jr., where they remained over Sunday, holding several meetings. On May 29, 1864, he stayed all night at Sister Eve Idleman's and the next day visited old Sister Parks, now blind, and read and prayed for her. This was his last visit to West Virginia; he was martyred on June 15, 1864.

The Brick church was completed to such a degree that it could be used for worship in 1866, though it is not known when it was begun. The lot was given by Henry and Martin Cosner, sons of Jacob Cosner, from lands inherited from their father, and in accordance with his will. Jacob Cosner died in 1861, but he declared in his will that land should be given upon which to build a church. This deed was made January 16, 1867, and named William Michaels, Henry Cosner, and Martin Cosner as the first trustees. Clay for the brick was taken from the land belonging to Martin Cosner and now owned by Otto Hess, and was burned close by in the big meadow, or the X-line meadow, as it was called. The brick layer was a Mr. Keller and his helpers were two Negroes. Window and door frames were made by Samuel Secrist, grandfather of Tom and Helen Secrist. Worship was held in the church before the floor was laid. Some years later it was ceiled overhead, and still later it was plastered, which shows that a consecrated people were building a church as they had means. Two entrances were used regularly, the pulpit midway between the entrances. The floor was level between the entrances, but was raised at each end. For communion services the tables were spread on the level part of the floor. In 1900 the

change was made to the present form. Along about 1869 or 1870, when educational advantages were few, and schoolhouses almost unknown, a school was conducted in the kitchen of the church. Bro. Daniel Hays taught school there.

This territory was first under the care of Elder John Kline, but after the organization in 1849 it was under the eldership of Elders Thomas Clark and Michael Lyon. Elder Martin Cosner had first charge after the Brick church was built and under his care the church grew in strength and numbers. He presided until about 1877 and then Jacob Wine served for a short while. Then, according to the church records, William Michaels and William George served jointly. In 1886 an accident ended the life of William Michaels and Charles Frantz was elected to work with Bro. George. They worked together till about 1894 and then Bro. Frantz served alone for a time. He resigned the office in 1903 and moved to the West.

Bro. Dennis Clark was elected to the ministry in 1886, advanced to the second degree in 1889, and later ordained to the eldership. However, he had charge of the congregation from 1903 to his resignation in 1910 or 1911. Since his resignation the eldership has been in the hands of elders from other congregations, in this probable order: Emra Fike, Obed Hamstead, Albert Arnold, Ezra Fike, Earle William Fike, and Ezra Fike at present.

Ministers who had been called to the service from this congregation are: Thomas Clark, Jr., Michael Lyon, Thomas D. Lyon, Martin Cosner, William Michaels, William George, Dennis Clark, John Ebert, Otis Ebert, Samson Smith, William Marcellus Lyon, Daniel Cosner, Charles Frantz, Russel Idleman, Clarence Hesse, Albert Johnson, Ernest Muntzing, Lester Evans, and Newton Poling.

The Oak Dale church is an outpost of this congregation. The church was built in the summer of 1916 and dedicated the following winter.

Pastors who have served the congregation are Earle William Fike, Alva Harsh, Earl Zigler, Carl Welch, and Norman A. Seese. These have served jointly with the Petersburg pastorate.

#### HARMAN

*Pioneer ministers:* John Kline, Michael Lyon, Daniel Thomas,

Sam A. Fike, Asa Harman, Moses Fike, Aaron Fike, W. M. George, W. M. Michaels.

*Present ministers:* Ellsworth Harman, Ezra Fike (elder), Jacob Huffman.

*Preaching places:* Church one-half mile east of Harman; in Harman.

*Date of organization:* 1856 or earlier.

*Boundary line:* Beginning at the point on the Allegheny Mountain where the Tucker, Grant, Randolph, and Pendleton county lines meet the line runs westward with the Tucker-Randolph county line to Jenningsonton where the Dry Fork River leaves the county line, thence it continues downward with said Dry Fork to its mouth near Parsons, thence up said river and Shavers Fork, a branch thereof, to Meadows, east of Elkins, thence southward with the railroad to Oakley, near the Randolph-Pocahontas county line, thence easterly with said county line to the top of Allegheny Mountain where the Pendleton County line is reached, thence northerly with said county line and top of mountain to the starting point where the four county lines meet.

Likely in May 1855 the first Brethren ministers in the persons of Brethren John Kline and Daniel Thomas of Virginia made the first Brethren preaching tour through Randolph County and on this tour baptized Joseph Summerfield and wife and others. In September 1856 they were back again.<sup>7</sup> They were joined by Brethren Joseph Arnold and Michael Lyon and went over a very rough track to Abraham Summerfield's, where they stayed all night. Next day Washington Summerfield and wife and Soldier White's wife were baptized. On this trip they stayed all night at John Pennington's and dined at Widow Cooper's.

Abraham Summerfield lived in what is now the Red Creek congregation but Soldier White lived in what is now the Harman congregation, as did John Pennington and Widow Cooper. John Pennington lived on the farm now owned by Arthur Cooper. He was a member of the Church of the Brethren and died in 1884 at the age of eighty-two years.

Soldier White, mentioned above and often visited by Bro. Kline, is described as follows:

<sup>7</sup> Funk, Benjamin, *Life of John Kline*. Page 381.

At Soldier White's we found a regular two-storied log house, containing a half dozen rooms, which serve as a place of entertainment to drovers who come from below to summer their cattle on the Fork, and to the occasional traveler who ventures to cross the wilderness by pack horse road from Seneca to Beverly, the county seat of Randolph. Here also is a tub mill, driven by a pretty stream of water, which has been caught and utilized before being swallowed by the dry river. This combination of circumstances makes Soldier White's a rather notable place in the Dry Fork community, and as the proprietor himself observed somewhat boastfully, there's not a month passes but he sees a stranger of some sort or another under his roof. The soldier is personally a man of worthy consideration. He is upwards of 60 yrs. old and for his peculiar opportunities and for seeing the world, is more cosmopolitan in his speech and views than most of his neighbors. He wears shoes habitually, and his residence exhibits the grade of civilization pertaining to a horse road. His face, including his stack of hair, looks as if cast in bronze, while his square sinewy hands are of the type most frequently carved and painted by Michael Angelo. His tall, athletic figure is a model of strength and endurance. . . . Having never been in military service, he cannot explain how he got the sobriquet of 'Soldier,' but thinks it was simply a tribute to his youthful strength and activity, which were extraordinary. . . . Being a justice of peace for Randolph, he is now more properly addressed as Squire White, which title of dignity he prefers.<sup>8</sup>

His wife was a member of the church, though perhaps he himself was not. Bro. Kline held meetings at his place.

Sister (Widow) Mary Cooper (born 1807—died 1878), mentioned above, widow of Jonas Cooper, is called the mother of the Harman congregation. She was one of the very first members there. She was the instigator of getting many preachers to come to the community. Many meetings were held at her house. At least three love feasts were held at her home and she fed all who came, members as well as others, large crowds, who came and remained for two days. She also fed their horses without charge. The old house—and one will be surprised to see how small it is—still stands where she lived on what is now the Earl Huffman place. Truly her sacrifice and effort for the church were great.

In 1859 Bro. Kline and Daniel Thomas came up via Seneca and spent the night with Widow Cooper on Saturday, September 3.<sup>9</sup> On Sunday they had meeting at ten o'clock and council in the afternoon. Asa Harman was elected speaker and Wash Summerfield deacon. Bro. Thomas was very much impressed

<sup>8</sup> Bosworth, Dr. A. S., *History of Randolph County*. 1916.

<sup>9</sup> Funk, Benjamin, *Life of John Kline*. Page 421.

with the wonderful sights of the region, the surpassing grandeur of the perpendicular walls of the rocks of Seneca and the extensive forests of beautiful and majestic timber, comprising wild cherry, tamarack, sugar maple, and other kinds which awaited the woodsman's ax. The means for transportation were wanting to make this an immensely profitable lumber region, he said.

In 1860 and again in 1863 Bro. Kline and others came preaching through this region, stopping at the homes of well-known persons: Solomon Harman, father of Asa, who still lived in the Harman Hills above the Mouth of Seneca; Adamsons, at Seneca; Harpers; Whites; Coopers; and Summerfields. He was the overseer of this region and made almost yearly visits until the Civil War stopped him. But even in the midst of war, he passed through the lines and came to the people and churches he loved. On their return from that trip they were arrested by the military authorities and questioned. They gave a satisfactory account of their trip and were accordingly released. Next year he was martyred. Likely from that date Bro. Asa Harman became elder-in-charge. Surely by that date, 1856, the beginning of his regular visits as overseer, was the beginning of the congregation. Perhaps the date 1859, the date of the election of a speaker and a deacon, was the date of organization.

Isaac Harman moved from Rockingham County, Virginia, to the Harman Hills of Pendleton County. Soon he returned to the Valley and married Christina Henkle of New Market and brought her back by horseback as there were no wagon roads through the wilderness. Solomon was born to them in 1807. Soon after his marriage to Elizabeth Harman he moved to Horse Camp Run in Randolph County, near where Harman now stands. He was tall and dark, had dark blue eyes, was even tempered and kindly disposed, while his wife was of fiery disposition, very active and energetic, which was likely due to the Redman Irish blood in her veins.<sup>10</sup>

To them Asa was born on October 31, 1834 (died 1902). He lived first in the Harman Hills but soon with his parents moved to the present site of Harman, the town being named in his honor. He was educated in the common schools, became a farmer and stockman, and one of the prominent ministers of his church in the state. In 1856 he married Elizabeth, daughter of

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<sup>10</sup> Harman, J. W., *Harmon-Harman Generations and Biography*. 1928.

Jonas and Mary (Widow) Rohrbaugh Cooper. After he moved to his new home at Harman he became interested in the Church of the Brethren, having been reared a United Brethren. A sermon by Sam A. Fike on the text, "Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only," opened a good many things to him. After the service he entered into a lengthy argument with Bro. Fike. Some who heard it said, "It won't be long now till he is in the church." Others who heard it said, "By the way he argues, it doesn't seem as if he will ever be in." But he was trying to get knowledge and soon he was in the church, and a very few years later, 1859, he was elected to the ministry as speaker. Soon he was advanced to the eldership and became one of the leading ministers of the district. He had charge of the congregation at least by 1865, soon after the death of Bro. Kline.

His children were Clay, Job, Simon P. (minister), Mary, Jason, Martin, Asa and Anna (deceased). He at one time owned over two thousand acres of land which he later divided among his children. Later he met severe financial reverses, largely through his sacrificing his home work for the ministry. He performed five hundred eighteen marriages, unquestionably more than did any other minister in Randolph County.

Other members of the church who were contemporaries of his mother, Widow Cooper, were: Valentine, Christian, Sam, Daniel, and Elijah Cooper; Asa, Solomon, Elizabeth, Jesse, Hannah, Sarah, Margaret, Christian, and Tiny Cooper; Phoebe Cooper; Susan Cooper; Becky Yokem; Jake Summerfield; and Wash Summerfield (minister).

At this time the whole territory now included in the Seneca, Harman, Red Creek and (likely) Junior congregations of the Second District was known as the Dry Fork territory. Preaching was also done at Job, where our people do not now preach. In 1897 the name was changed to Harman and separation was made from the Red Creek field as well as from the Seneca field.

During the active ministry of Bro. Asa Harman the church built up. He gave himself unstintingly. In 1900 there were more than a hundred members, after the territory was divided into three congregations. In council assembled in December 1898, feeling the need of help for the aging Asa, the church decided to ask Bro. Jonas Fike to preach once a month and to pay his expenses out of the treasury. Because of the great financial

sacrifice of Bro. Asa and his loss, this congregation has always felt the need of help for its ministers. This church here at this time must have been one of the first in the First District of West Virginia to begin to pay its ministers for preaching trips. Almost all of the preaching trips of that day were made at the sole expense of the minister. Here records show payments for all preaching. In a council held in December 1901 the congregation decided to pay expenses for delegates to district meeting. The church also looked after the welfare of its widows and poor, often supplying them with help, food, wood, stoves and stove-pipe, paying the bills from the church treasury or the members doing it together.

There is no record to show just when the church was built but at the council on July 3, 1897, arrangements were made for building the kitchen to the church, Job Harman to furnish rafters and Jesse Harman to furnish nails. The church of course was built before 1897.

That this congregation was an isolated one in a stock-raising region even then is shown by the fact that in 1897 the church petitioned Annual Meeting through district meeting to ask the Brethren Publishing House to insert the Chicago Stock Market quotations in the *Gospel Messenger*.<sup>11</sup>

In 1924 Elder Jonas Fike resigned as elder of the congregation on account of bodily infirmities, and his resignation was accepted with sympathy and regret. His father, Sam, had been a most helpful influence in the early days of the congregation. The son, Jonas, carried on faithfully. At his resignation the responsibility was handed down to the next descendant, Ezra Fike, who still carries on.

Ellsworth Harman, also of the third generation of ministers (Asa, Simon, Ellsworth), is a young minister of the congregation, though part of the time he is away teaching. The congregation has great possibilities. Many of her members are educated and trained. Financially they are above the average. Their need is a resident minister who can give them adequate leadership.

In 1943 Dr. Jacob Huffman and family settled at Harman, where he has a large practice and helps in the work of the church.

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<sup>11</sup> Minutes, *Harman Church*, Sept. 3, 1897.

## KEYSER

*Pioneer ministers:* George Leatherman, B. W. Smith.

*Present ministers:* A. R. Showalter (pastor), Otis Johnson, B. M. Rollins, A. D. Burgess, Philip DeMuth.

*Preaching places:* Main Street and Fort Avenue, Keyser; Green Mountain, three miles west of Keyser.

*Date of organization:* 1924.

*Boundary line:* Starting at a point on top of Knobley Mountain, just east of the reservoir, the line runs westerly in a direct line to the mouth of Stoney Run, thence upward with said Stoney Run to its headwaters and to the top of the Allegheny Mountain near by, thence with top of said Allegheny Mountain northerly in a line to the Potomac River, thence downward with said river to the passage through the Knobley Mountain—though naturally those members living in McCoole, Maryland, should belong to this congregation—thence in line with the top of Knobley Mountain, it returns to the starting point, just east of the reservoir.

Much of the following information was secured from the 1929 church directory of the Keyser congregation.

In 1885 Elder George Leatherman, of sainted memory, moved into the New Creek Valley and settled on a farm just about four miles south of Keyser. Being an active minister he began at once to proclaim the gospel in this valley. In 1890 he built by subscription what became known as the Leatherman church—the mother church in this valley. Over a period of some twenty years, ending with his death, Bro. Leatherman served as presiding elder of this territory. Assisting him in the ministry were Brethren I. F. Roberts and John Parish. Among those who came into the field from time to time were I. W. Abernathy, S. N. McCann, John Baker, D. B. Arnold, George S. Arnold, Charles Frantz, Jonas Fike, and others.

On March 29, 1905, Elder B. W. Smith and family moved from the Tear Coat congregation and settled on a farm on Beaver Run. During this same year Bro. George W. Leatherman was called to his heavenly home and Bro. Smith was chosen presiding elder of the New Creek congregation, which place he held many years. Under the able leadership of Bro. Smith the work enjoyed a steady growth and other preaching places were

opened. Keyser was a growing town and offered many opportunities to the Brethren. A number of Brethren families were moving in there. In 1911 a call for the gospel was sent out. This call was answered by Bro. Smith. A hall was rented and the work was started. For a number of years both Sunday school and preaching services were held in halls. The old Odd Fellows hall on Mineral Street was first used, and then for a time the services were held in the Mystic Chan hall on North Main Street.

By 1916 the New Creek congregation, feeling the need for a house of worship in Keyser, asked the district meeting to help make that a possibility. They were given the privilege of soliciting the district for funds. Again in 1917 the congregation came to district meeting for help but because of the high price of material, they were advised not to try it for another year. In 1919 district meeting considered that the time had come to build a house in Keyser and urged all congregations to respond favorably to a solicitation, and the district ministerial board undertook the responsibility of helping to secure a minister to locate among them.

On January 25, 1919, a very choice lot on Main Street and Fort Avenue was purchased and work on the new church was started. The loyal devotion and unceasing sacrifices of these faithful brethren and sisters who promoted the movement will never be fully known and appreciated in this world. For fear of undervaluing or omitting some names it is thought best in this brief history to mention no names. The names and deeds are recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life. In December 1920 the church was formally dedicated in the presence of a multitude of people. Bro. Jeremiah Thomas of the Sandy Creek congregation delivered the dedicatory sermon. Following the dedication a revival was conducted by Bro. B. W. Smith, stimulating interest and adding a number to the church.

On June 11, 1922, Bro. Russell G. West of Virginia came to Keyser as the first pastor. In round numbers the membership was about fifty. The Sunday-school attendance averaged about forty-five. In a short time the work was better organized and began to function smoothly, membership increased, and the church began to win a recognized standing among the other churches of Keyser.

During the six years' ministry of Bro. West the church en-

joyed a number of stirring revivals. Some of the outstanding men of the brotherhood served the church as evangelists, including A. B. Miller, John T. Glick, Jeremiah Thomas, A. C. Miller, O. B. Maphis, M. J. Brougher, and B. M. Rollins. Bro. Nelson T. Huffman served as music director during the first four meetings and C. W. Roller the fifth. At each meeting a number were added to the church.

The church has taken an active part in religious education. The Sunday school has had a steady growth as follows: 1921—40; 1922—57; 1923—72; 1924—86; 1925—100; 1926—104; 1927—115; 1928—132, which is about where it has remained during the following years. The church has also taken a leading part in leadership training, both as a local church and in co-operation with other churches of the city. It became a pioneer in the work of daily vacation Bible schools. During the summer of 1928 the Keyser churches put on a community Bible school with Bro. West serving as principal. During the following years the church enjoyed the services of such outstanding leaders as Ezra Flory, Minor C. Miller, and J. Quinter Miller, who helped in the field of religious education to give this church a high standing.

Up until 1924 the Keyser work was a part of the New Creek congregation. By that time, the work having grown to creditable standing, it was thought best to divide the territory and organize a city church. This was effected in a meeting in the Keyser church with Brethren George S. Arnold and B. W. Smith in charge. The line was established parallel with Stoney Run, three miles south of Keyser, thus giving to Keyser the outlying territory, including the town of Piedmont. The new organization took the name *Keyser*. As Bro. Smith requested to be relieved of the responsibility, Bro. Jeremiah Thomas was chosen first elder-in-charge. This place he held until 1925 when Bro. West was ordained and chosen as presiding elder.

The financial development was slow. Most of the charter members were formerly of country churches under the free ministry. While most of them were enthusiastic and consecrated they had had very little instruction in proportionate giving. Furthermore, they had just purchased a lot and erected a building and were making sacrifices to pay for these. The weekly offerings were small. Money for current expenses was raised by

solicitation from home to home each month. The pastor was secured with no financial securities whatever, and for the first four years, in order to lighten the burden of the church, he served as an instructor in the high school. Various improvements were made and in 1925 the envelope system was installed and the church placed on a firm financial basis. At that time the pastor was placed on a full-time basis.

In 1924 when the Piedmont territory was assigned to Keyser, the pastor immediately made a survey of possibilities there. A few Brethren families were found and their letters were assigned to Keyser as there was no church in that territory. In the meantime, through revivals in Keyser, a few others of that territory were added to the church. In 1925 six brethren and sisters met at the home of Bro. S. K. Fike in Piedmont for prayer. In this group a prayer meeting was organized for the purpose of promoting the work of the Brethren there. Each Tuesday evening this ever-increasing group of consecrated folks held their meetings from house to house. So rapidly did these meetings grow in interest and numbers that the Brethren began to think in terms of their own Sunday services there. In October 1926 the Odd Fellows hall of Westernport was rented and Bro. West conducted a two weeks' revival there. As a result of these meetings the membership was drawn together and a number were added to the church. Following the revival the hall was retained for Sunday school and preaching. The Sunday school was organized with an initial attendance of twenty-three, but so splendid was the interest that the attendance reached almost the one hundred mark by the end of the year.

In April 1927 Bro. S. Z. Smith of Ohio conducted a revival in the hall and thirty-five were added to the church. On July 18, 1927, this mission was formally organized as the Westernport congregation of the Western District of Maryland, with a charter membership of sixty-six. By this organization twenty-six members were automatically transferred from the Keyser congregation. Bro. Arthur Scrogum of Accident, Maryland, who had been assisting in the work, was chosen as part-time pastor. This church, which is in a sense an outgrowth of the work at Keyser, had by 1929 reached a membership of ninety-five and a Sunday-school enrollment of one hundred twenty, and by 1943 a membership of two hundred sixty-five and a Sunday-school enrollment of one hundred thirty-four.

On September 1, 1928, Bro. Russell West closed his pastorate in order to enter Bethany Biblical Seminary. He was succeeded by Bro. B. M. Rollins as pastor. Other pastors who served are as follows in order: Roy K. Miller, C. O. Showalter, and at present A. R. Showalter.

On April 23, 1938, the debt hanging over the church for seventeen years was paid off and the old note burned. During the previous three and a half years \$5,000 above running expenses was raised, which was used to purchase a parsonage located at 82 First Street. This property was improved by installing a hot water heating plant. Recently the church has been enlarged, Sunday-school rooms added, an electric organ and a new heating system installed, and the church has taken her place among the leading churches of the district.

#### KNOBLEY

*Pioneer ministers:* Joseph Arnold, John Kline, William George, Thomas Clark, Michael Lyon, Martin Cosner, William Michaels, and others.

*Present ministers:* B. W. Smith (elder), Raphael Leatherman, Robert Hoover (pastor).

*Preaching place:* Knobley church, seven miles south of Antioch.

*Date of organization:* 1887.

*Boundary line:* Beginning at the Greenland Gap the line runs northeasterly with top of New Creek Mountain to a point south of Route 50, thence in an easterly line, dividing the Beaver Run and Knobley congregations, to the top of Pattersons Creek Mountain, thence southerly with top of said mountain to a point east of Greenland Gap, thence in an air-line east to the starting point in Greenland Gap.

By 1840 there was much church activity in the area now included in this congregation. Joseph Arnold was very active and he was assisted by the Brethren from Virginia and other home ministers soon to be elected, as recorded in the history of the mother congregation, Greenland.

Elder William George was born January 16, 1817, and died May 27, 1899. He married Lydia Ann Michaels, sister of William Michaels, an elder in the Greenland congregation. His son, D. Wiatt, born August 13, 1848, was a minister. A daughter, Betty,

married Taylor Martin, and to that union Charles Martin was born, and he became a minister. Another daughter, Rachael, married Dan Ludwig and to them a son, Bursey, was born and he became a minister. Elder William George was a very liberal man in the work of the church, giving liberally to every good cause. To him belongs largely the credit for beginning the work at Knobley and for her progress for more than fifty years.

The active work began here about 1840, but was known as part of the Greenland arm of the German Baptist Church. The deed for the church was made October 11, 1876, and was recorded January 9, 1877. The church was built in 1876. Because of the very large territory of the Greenland congregation, a division was asked for and was granted on September 24, 1887. In the thereabouts of that date must have been the organization of the Knobley congregation.

Elder Charles Frantz, son of Henry J. Frantz and Augusta Muntingz Frantz, was born in Germany on August 7, 1854. On May 11, 1871, he married Mary Ellen Cosner. He was baptized in 1870, elected to the ministry in 1880 and ordained in October 1886. He was the elder of the Knobley congregation for a number of years and served also as elder of the Greenland congregation, from about the time of his ordination, jointly with William George until 1894, and then alone until his resignation in 1903. On that date he moved west to Idaho, where he was serving as elder of the Fayette Valley church at the time of his death on June 4, 1904. He was the elder of the Greenland congregation when the Brick church was repaired and the church at Scherr was built, to both of which he gave liberally.

Elder Raphael B. Leatherman has served faithfully in this congregation for a number of years. Olonzo Fike and Earl Schnader have served as summer pastors. Elder B. W. Smith was chosen elder in 1938.

In 1944 Bro. Robert Hoover was secured to serve as pastor jointly the Knobley, Sunnyside, and Beaver Run churches.

#### MORGANTOWN

*Pioneer ministers:* Joseph I. Cover, Andrew J. Sterling, J. C. Johnson, J. H. Myers, Solomon Bucklew, Alpheus DeBolt, Jeremiah Thomas, Jasper Barnthouse, John A. Glick, Obed Hamstead.

*Present ministers:* Glenn H. Bowlby (pastor), Obed Hamstead.

*Preaching points:* Wiles Hill church, Highland and Melrose Sts.; Mt. Union school, three miles north of Morgantown.

*Date of organization:* September 14, 1901.

*Boundary line* (indefinitely established): Beginning at the point on Cheat River where Big Sandy empties into said Cheat, the line runs northward with said Cheat to the Pennsylvania line, thence westward with said line to the Monongahela River, thence upward with said river (however, including all of the west side of Morgantown) to Uffington, thence eastward by air-line to where the Monongalia-Preston county line crosses West Virginia Route 7, thence by air-line back to starting point on Cheat River.

The extended quotation following is from the History of the Church of the Brethren of Western Pennsylvania, by J. E. Blough, 1916.

The Mount Union (Morgantown) Congregation is the result of home mission work by the Brethren near the middle of the nineteenth century. The dates and names of the first workers are not known. Ministers from the Sandy Creek came across Cheat Mountain and held services in "Cheat Neck." Workers from the Second District of West Virginia came down into the Monogahela River Valley. Immigrants from Pennsylvania settled on the newer lands of West Virginia and their ministers visited them occasionally and held services. The influence of Georges Creek Congregation (of Western Pennsylvania) prevailed, and Monongahela County became part of that congregation.

... As early as 1844 there were a few members living near Morgantown, West Virginia. By 1883 thirty members were living in that district and a meeting house 40 x 60 was erected and dedicated the same year and the first Love Feast held at the same time. In 1901 the members living around Morgantown were formed into a separate congregation and named Mount Union Congregation.

Services were held in school houses and churches of other denominations, but in 1883 the Mount Union Church was built for the central part three miles north of Morgantown.

A list of the early members is not available, but some of the members since 1870 were: John Ganz, minister; Oliver Miller, James Hamilton and family, R. C. Ross, deacon; J. F. Ross, Harriet Reed, Rebecca Heard, Ross E. Reed, minister; Joseph Bixler and family, Millard Reed, Omozine Reed, Elizabeth Ross, and Silas Pugh and family...

When the Union House was built in 1883 there were about thirty members in the county, and eighteen years later, in 1901,

there were only about that number. So at the March council, a vote was taken to reorganize a new congregation, and see if the work would not prosper better. The vote was ratified by the Fairview Council a little later, and the new congregation was formally organized on September 14, 1901 under the name of Mount Union. Virgil C. Finnell and Walter J. Hamilton were elected to the ministry. Miles Hamilton and Silas Pugh were elected deacons to assist R. C. Ross and Joseph I. Johnson, who had served the Georges Creek Congregation, and Elder Jasper Barnthouse was chosen for bishop and presided over the congregation for a number of years.

During the summer of 1901 John A. Glick, of Uniontown, Pennsylvania, preached in the M. E. Church on Walnut Street, Morgantown, one Sunday evening. A number of members from Mount Union were present. One of them, W. J. Hamilton, got a vision of a Brethren Church in town. At the council in January he proposed the opening of a mission in Morgantown. A committee composed of himself, R. E. Reed and Millard Reed was appointed to secure a room. Nothing was available, so he persuaded his father, Miles Hamilton, and his uncle, Francis Hamilton, to buy a lot and build a room 24 x 32 feet for Sunday School. Thus the Wiles Hill Mission was opened in July 1902. A little later Thomas H. Miller and family located in town. He, being a minister, was a great help to the new work. Sylvanus M. Annon and family also moved to Morgantown and became a pillar in the mission. He was ordained to the eldership while there.

On September 11, 1909, Arthur Bailey and Ezra Wolfe, two of the new converts, were elected as deacons. A brick church house, 36 x 40 feet was then erected, and dedicated by Elder H. C. Early, August 14, 1910. Two ministers, William E. Hamilton and Arthur Bailey, were elected at the Love Feast the evening before as Brethren Annon and Miller had moved away. John Osborn and Frank Pugh were elected deacons on December 13, 1911. Walter J. Hamilton moved away in 1912, and on March 8, 1913, Daniel E. Shaffer, J. M. Pletcher, and John Osborn were elected to the ministry. Arthur Bailey was ordained to the eldership and in the year of 1915 Elder Solomon Bucklew moved into the congregation, becoming both elder in charge and pastor.

There are (1916) two Sunday Schools, a Christian Workers Society, prayer meeting, teacher training class, and teacher's meeting. The present official board consists of Elders Solomon Bucklew and Arthur Bailey; ministers, Ross Reed, William F. Hamilton, Daniel E. Shaffer; deacons, Silas Pugh, Ezra Wolfe, Frank Pugh, Miles Hamilton.

Following Bro. Bucklew, Marshall Wolfe served as student pastor for a number of years. Then Bro. Obed Hamstead served as pastor and elder following the year 1927 for a number of years. Raymond Martin then served for a time. At present Glenn H. Bowlby serves as pastor and A. R. Showalter as elder.

In 1936 the congregation separated from the Western District of Pennsylvania and by application through the elders' body of the First District of West Virginia united with that district as it lies wholly within the state of West Virginia.

This congregation occupies a very important place among the churches of the state of West Virginia as it is located in the university town of that state. There are many of our church youth who go there for their education and they need a good fellowship with the Church of the Brethren. May God bless you, Morgantown, in your challenging opportunity.

#### NORTH FORK

*Pioneer ministers:* Israel Weimer, Jonas Fike, John T. Cosner, Raphael Baker, Frank Nines.

*Present ministers:* None resident or regular.

*Preaching place:* Jordan Run church near Jordan Run.

*Date of organization:* About 1898.

*Boundary line:* Beginning at the point on top of Allegheny Mountain where the road from Brushy Ridge and Streby crosses the top, the line runs southward with top of said mountain to the Pendleton-Grant county line; thence southeastward with said county line to the district line between First West Virginia and Northern Virginia, which line passes near Ketterman, thence with said line, a direct air-line to Petersburg to the South Branch of the Potomac, thence upward with North Fork of said river to a point opposite the high part of New Creek Mountain, thence northeasterly with top of said mountain to a point east of Brushy Ridge, thence down said mountain to Brushy Ridge and following the road from Brushy Ridge up to the top of Allegheny Mountain, the starting point.

In 1898 Bro. Israel Weimer and family moved from the Greenland congregation to what is now the North Fork congregation and located near the head of Hopeville Gap. He immediately began preaching services in the near-by schoolhouses and homes. The response was good and help soon began to arrive in the persons of Jonas Fike and John S. Fike of the Eglon congregation and Raphael Baker and Frank Nines from the Allegheny congregation. The Hopeville, Long Hollow, Corner (now Cabins) and Rohrbaugh schools and some homes were points of church services.

By 1904 the work on Jordan Run had progressed to the point where a church was needed and a union church was built there in that year, with the United Brethren and the Baptists assisting. That is still the place of worship. Services were often held at the Rohrbaugh school and many of the Rohrbaughs were converted there. Both love feasts and revivals were held there.

Interest in religion has always been good in this community and church attendance excellent, the house being filled often both then and now. By 1908 there were about sixty members there. By this time or soon thereafter the district mission board was giving some financial help in securing leadership. Obed Hamstead served for a time as elder-in-charge; then in 1913 the congregation went under the care of the mission board. Israel Weimer moved away and the congregation suffered much for lack of leadership.

Foster M. Bittinger spent the summer of 1923 in the congregation as student pastor. The next year he and his wife returned to stay two years. During this time revivals, prayer meetings, training schools, love feasts, singing schools, and other activities were held and the work prospered. Many were added to the church and Ken Barger and Walter Berg were elected deacons. The membership reached one hundred twenty-four, perhaps a peak for the congregation.

Following this the work suffered from lack of leadership, preaching being furnished by ministers from a distance, among whom of later years were A. S. Arnold, Norman Seese, Carl Welch, and Joe Cook. There are a number of faithful workers and members there, but they desperately need leadership.

At the Corners (now Cabins) Bro. Weimer conducted church among the Negroes and a number were baptized and attended communion services, certainly the only place in West Virginia where this was ever done. Then for a while work there was dropped. But in the years of Bro. Bittinger's work there, he preached for them and four Negro young people were baptized and received into the church. They were of the Washington family. This field is still a challenge to the home mission workers of our brotherhood. The membership is now about sixty. Bro. Joe Cook of Streby preaches there occasionally.

## OLD FURNACE

*Pioneer ministers:* B. W. Smith, D. B. Arnold, Peter Arnold.

*Present ministers:* A. J. Whitacre, Jesse Whitacre, J. S. Whitacre, Ruth Whitacre, Charles Whitacre, Charles Self.

*Preaching place:* Church six miles south of Cumberland on Route 28.

*Date of organization:* 1914.

*Boundary line:* Starting on the South Branch of the Potomac at the point where said river is crossed by the magisterial district line which divides the Cabin Run and Frankfort districts, the boundary line runs northeasterly with said river to its mouth, thence westerly with the North Branch of the Potomac to House Rocks, just below Miltenburger Island, thence directly westward to the North Branch of the Potomac, thence southwesterly with said river to the aforementioned magisterial district line, which is also the Beaver Run congregational line, thence eastwardly the line continues with said magisterial district line to the starting point on the South Branch of the Potomac River.

It was through Elder B. W. Smith that the Old Furnace congregation had its beginning. He began preaching there and in February 1896 Jacob Abe was baptized at the Adam Abe place in the Little Capon, the first member in the congregation.

In November 1897 A. J. Whitacre and wife moved into the Old Furnace community and in May 1897 organized the first Sunday school in the Abe schoolhouse with three members: A. J. Whitacre, his wife, and Jacob Abe. From these three the congregation has grown to be a good-sized church.

Several series of meetings were held, mostly in the Abe schoolhouse, and a number were added to the church. The first love feast was held in 1908 in a machine shed on the old Abe place. The first council meeting was held in the Abe school August 10, 1912. At that meeting A. J. Whitacre and Elmer Lichliter were elected to the ministry and W. E. Abe to the deaconship. He was also the first church clerk.

During the summer of 1913 the Furnace Chapel church was built and in the same year, on September 14, was dedicated by E. T. Fike. On April 11, 1914, an organization was effected and B. W. Smith was chosen elder-in-charge; he continued in charge

until 1929, fourteen years. The name, Old Furnace, was chosen from an old iron ore furnace which stands just across the road from the church. At the date of organization there were thirty-four members. This was formerly a part of the Beaver Run congregation.

Church work had been carried on in the Wiley Ford community for a number of years by some of the ministers from Old Furnace and by those resident in Wiley Ford. In 1938, under the eldership of C. O. Showalter, Elder J. S. Whitacre was appointed assistant elder at the Old Furnace church and Vernon Shanholtz at the Wiley Ford community. The work at Wiley Ford continued to grow and in 1940 they asked district conference for the privilege of organizing a separate congregation. This was granted and division was made by a committee of elders on December 1, 1940. Both churches now face a promising future. Jesse Whitacre is elder-in-charge at present.

### PETERSBURG

*Pioneer minister:* Albert S. Arnold.

*Present minister:* Peter Garber (elder).

*Preaching point:* In Petersburg.

*Date of organization:* November 9, 1930.

*Boundary line:* Beginning on the South Branch of the Potomac River at Petersburg, following said river to the North Fork of said river, thence following North Fork to a point opposite the high part of New Creek Mountain, thence following the high part of New Creek Mountain in a northeasterly direction to a point in Kline's Gap on the boundary line between Union and Milroy districts, thence in an easterly direction following the South Branch of Luney's (Lunice) Creek to Luney's Creek, thence following Luney's Creek in a southerly direction to where a bridge on the county road crosses said Luney's Creek, thence following said county road to a point on the top of the hill known as Old Camp Grounds, thence from the Old Camp Grounds in a direct course east to a point on the boundary line between Grant and Hardy counties, thence following said county line south to the South Branch of the Potomac at a point in Petersburg Gap, thence following the South Branch of the Potomac in a westerly direction to the place of beginning at Petersburg, including

South Petersburg. This line was approved at the district conference in 1931.

Rockingham and Shenandoah counties and part of Augusta County lie along the line of West Virginia, which had separated from the old state in 1861 and was admitted to the Union as the new state of West Virginia in 1863, after the secession movement. It came under Union control. Along this line Virginia juts out westwardly with an angle into Hardy County, West Virginia, to the top of Shenandoah Mountain, where to the west may be seen a magnificent panorama of mountains, valleys, and ravines with the Allegheny Mountain in the far distance. Half a day's ride would from this point bring one within the vicinity of Petersburg. For years before the separation this had been a fruitful mission field of the Brethren from those counties of Virginia. Through this great territory for years had old faithful Nell been carrying Elder John Kline on his many mission trips. Through this vast territory he was well known and loved. Many times had he crossed the fording here in Petersburg. It was very common for young men to go west to visit friends and relatives. They would cross through here to New Creek (Keyser) or Oakland and reach the B. & O. Railroad for such travels. John Kline often did this in later years.

This vast territory and beyond offered freedom to the conscientious objector of Civil War days. Some then paid the fee of five hundred dollars and were free. Others, many of them, could not, though the church sacrificed greatly to help. Many tried to escape to the North or to the West.

Two such companies of Brethren and Mennonites left their homes in the Valley during the month of March 1862 for the purpose of going west and escaping the draft, which they on religious grounds opposed. They would not make war nor learn the art of making war.

The first company of about eighteen persons in number was captured near Moorefield, and taken back to Harrisonburg, via Woodstock and Mt. Jackson. Each night they had worship and sometimes the guards were much affected. They prayed for their release and for their captors. After about two weeks' imprisonment in Harrisonburg they were released as it was seen to be useless to force them into the army.

The second party of about seventy in number was captured

near Petersburg. As the refugees were crossing the river here many of the town folks came out to see them. The river was more than fifty yards wide and as more than half the company were on foot some horses had to make three trips to get all across. Shortly after passing through the town they were accosted by two soldiers who stopped them and brought them back to Petersburg by solicitation. They were taken into a large upper room and as each entered he was asked whether he had any arms or not. When the question was put to one he answered, "Yes." The guard requested to see them and was shown a New Testament, the sword of the Spirit. He replied, "That is very good. You may keep that." No arms were found among the Brethren. They were finally taken to Richmond, Virginia, and eventually released on condition of payment of five hundred dollars each.<sup>12</sup>

Other companies did get through to New Creek Station, now Keyser, where they entrained for the West and there stayed till the close of the war. The Union forces later stationed at Petersburg were a help to these refugees, suffering hardship for their Master, the Prince of Peace.

Thus though Brethren often frequented Petersburg and there was much preaching round about, perhaps Elder Albert Arnold was the first to hold services in the town. Early in 1919 he began to hold services in the courthouse as he drove through from his home in the White Pine congregation to hold his week-end services in the North Fork congregation. By 1930 more members had located in the town and B. M. Rollins of Keyser was secured for a revival in the town. This was in March. Following this meeting a Sunday school was organized in the courthouse, with Jesse Arnold as the first superintendent.

In 1930 the members at Petersburg asked district conference to give permission for the organization of a congregation at Petersburg. Permission was granted and on November 9, 1930, the district ministerial board, composed of John S. Fike, Albert Arnold, and Ezra Fike, met with the members at the courthouse and the Petersburg congregation was organized. Earle Wm. Fike was chosen as elder for this congregation of fifty members. He served for two years, also as part-time pastor, and then because of ill-health resigned. Elder A. S. Arnold then

<sup>12</sup> Sanger and Hays, *The Olive Branch of Peace*.

served for six months, until Earle Fike was called to serve jointly this congregation and the Greenland congregation. In this capacity he served until he left to assume the pastorate at Roanoke in 1934.

In June 1934 Brother and Sister Alva Harsh began their work as pastors. During this pastorate plans were made for a new church and a building fund was started. In the spring of 1936 Elder Peter Garber was chosen as elder and during this year a lot was bought and paid for.

In the fall of 1936 Brother and Sister Harsh accepted a call to serve on the China mission field, where they served until their disappearance. Then Brother and Sister Earl M. Zigler served till the fall of 1937, at which time they accepted a call to serve on the India mission field. The calling away of these two pastors was a severe blow to the congregation, but through the untiring efforts of Bro. Garber and others the work was kept going. Brother and Sister Carl Welch next served as pastors for about two years.

On September 29, 1938, ground was broken for a church building on the lot already purchased, and mason work was started on January 6, 1939. With much hard work and many discouragements the work was pushed to completion under the leadership of Elder Garber and others. It is a modern structure of brick and tile with a seating capacity of two hundred seventy-five and a parsonage in the basement. It was dedicated on October 1, 1939, with Elder C. D. Bonsack preaching the sermon. Much sacrificial labor had gone into the structure with the oldest laborer, Elder Garber, giving one hundred days of free labor and the youngest, Arlyn Arnold, age nine, giving fifteen days.

Upon the resignation of Bro. Welch in the fall of 1939, Bro. Norman Seese was called and took up the pastorate October 10, 1939. Through his labors and those of Elder Garber and others of the faithful membership the work went forward. Bro. Seese became pastor of the Valley River church in Second West Virginia in 1944.

#### RED CREEK

*Pioneer ministers:* William Bucklew and Jacob Wine of Virginia.

*Present minister:* D. B. Spaid (elder).

*Preaching places:* Dry Fork, in Dry Fork; Wolford, two miles

northwest of Dry Fork; Bethel, four miles north of Dry Fork.

*Date of organization:* 1879; reorganized in 1902 by J. T. Cosner and Jonas Fike.

*Boundary line:* Beginning at a point in Hendricks, at the mouth of the Blackwater River, the line runs up said river to a point east of Thomas where said river leaves the Elkins branch of the Western Maryland Railroad, thence with said railway to the site of Fairfax, thence by air-line to the Fairfax Stone, which is also a point on the Grant-Tucker county line, thence eastward and southward with that county line to the Tucker-Randolph county line, thence westward with the Tucker-Randolph county line to Jenningston where the Dry Fork River leaves the county line, thence downward with said Dry Fork to the starting point at the mouth of the Blackwater River.

About 1850 William Bucklew of Virginia held a revival at Brights Chapel, near Elk. This was the first meeting by the Brethren in this congregation, so far as is known. Martin Pennington, one of the oldest members of the congregation, thinks it was at this meeting that his father and mother, Nathanael and Susan Pennington, united with the church. Likely at this same meeting Mary Flannagan Wolford and her brother, Robert Flannagan, Sr., united with the church. At least it was near that time. Bro. Flannagan later became a minister.

Other early members were America Carr Flannagan, wife of Robert Flannagan, Sr., and their children: Robert, Jr., Annie, Sampson, Julia, and Lucretia, all uniting with the church later. Others were Sylvia Carr and wife, Jane; Sampson Mick, Sr.; Sampson Mick, Jr.; Martin V. Pennington (1888); Brother and Sister Charles Bubar (1893), and Samuel Cooper of Harman, who moved to Dry Fork about 1880. Still another was Bro. Washington Summerfield, who lived somewhere on the Dry Fork River and was baptized by John Kline on September 2, 1856.<sup>13</sup> Bro. Summerfield, Sister Summerfield, and Soldier White's wife were all baptized on that day. Marjorie Pennington has verified the fact that Washington Summerfield lived at Gladwin. He was a preacher in 1889, and perhaps preached before that time. The following is a quotation from Bro. Kline:<sup>14</sup> "September 1, 1856, Meeting at Levi Wilmot's. After dinner Joseph Arnold and

<sup>13</sup> Funk, Benjamin, *Life of John Kline*. Page 381.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* Page 381.

Michael Lyon come with him, over a very rough track, to Abraham Summerfields where they stay all night. September 2, he preaches the funeral of Mrs. Summerfield. In the afternoon they have a meeting at old man Summerfield's on the Dry Fork of Cheat River. Washington Summerfield and his wife and soldier White's wife are baptized. Stay all night at John Pennington's." Pennington likely lived at Harman, on the farm now owned by Arthur Cooper. Still other members were Saul Bonner and Jim Bonner and Isaac Roy.

Ministers who lived in this congregation were Saul Bonner, George W. Leatherman of Canaan Valley (1880- ), Washington Roy of Dry Fork (1875- ), Asa Weimer and Israel Weimer of Lanesville, Washington Summerfield of Gladwin (1889- ), Robert Flannagan, Sr., and Robert Flannagan, Jr., of Dry Fork. Robert Flannagan was appointed to preach in 1903 and was likely advanced to the second degree in 1910.

Early preaching points were: Big Run or Bonner Mountain, Canaan Crossing, Flannagan Hill, Beuna Cortland, Lanesville, Carr's Camp, and Brights Chapel. Jacob Wine followed William Bucklew at Brights Chapel.

As early as 1889 Samuel Fike preached at Flannagan Hill. Jonas Fike preached there in 1894 and in 1896 he held a revival there. Since then John Fike, Ezra Fike, perhaps Emra Fike, and Dan Spaid have preached there. Joseph, John, and Albert Arnold, and Lorenzo Fike have all preached within this congregation. Moses Fike also preached in a church near where the Wolford church now stands.

About 1908 Emra Fike and Seymour Hamstead organized a Sunday school on Bonner Mountain. Among the older members there were Jesse Davis and Mrs. Jesse Davis; Job Davis and wife, Annie; Sampson Collins and wife, Martha; S. J. Pennington and wife, Phoebe; Henry and Lottie Pennington.

The Bethel church was built in 1901, but more work was done on it in 1914-17. It belongs to the Brethren and the Mennonite churches. Jonas Fike preached the dedicatory sermon. Rev. Thompson, a Christian minister, gave it the name *Bethel*, taking it from the Bible. The Dry Fork schoolhouse was fitted for church services about 1920. Preaching and services are also held in the Wolford church, a union church.

The Red Creek congregation was separated from the Harman congregation.

Sister Mary Shickel came to this congregation under the direction of the district mission board in 1916. She assisted in Sunday-school work at various places. She remained on the field, though not under the direction of the mission board, until 1926.

Foster M. Bittinger acted as summer pastor in the congregation in 1921, holding revivals of a week or more in length at Bethel, Wolford, Canaan Crossing, and Dry Fork, receiving into the church twenty-four new members. He preached his first sermon at Dry Fork on June 22, 1921, *The Christian's Call*, the text being John 11: 28.

Dan Spaid preached here in 1922 and Paul Sanger came in 1922 as part-time pastor, teaching in the Dry Fork school. He was in charge of the congregation until the summer of 1925. Since 1925 Dan Spaid has been in charge of the congregation excepting where there were summer pastors, among whom were Lawrence Rice (1936), and Carl Zeigler (1936). Russell West, Alva Harsh, DeWitt L. Miller, Mary Martin Leatherman, and Jacob Huffman have in recent years held revivals in this congregation.

#### SANDY CREEK

*Pioneer ministers:* John Boger, Jacob Thomas, Michael Thomas, Andrew Umbel, George Meyer.

*Present ministers:* Russell Showalter (pastor); Chester Thomas (elder); Walter Van Sickle.

*Preaching places:* Canaan, two miles north of Clifton Mills; Glade Union, one-fourth mile northwest of Hazelton; Mt. Dale, three miles south of Hazelton; Mt. Grove, five miles northwest of Bruceton Mills; Salem, four miles north of Brandonville; Shady Grove, one and one-half mile east of Brandonville; Union Center, at Clifton Mills.

*Date of organization:* 1835.

*Boundary line:* Beginning at a point near Orr where the Sang Run Road crosses the West Virginia-Maryland state line the congregational boundary line runs northward with said state line to the Pennsylvania line, thence westward with the Pennsyl-

vania-West Virginia state line to the Cheat River, thence upward with said river to the point where Big Sandy Creek empties into said Cheat, thence by an almost direct easterly air-line, passing through Valley Point, through Lennox to Orr, where it contacts the Sang Run Road, it continues easterly with said road to the starting point at the state line.

This congregation occupies the northern part of Preston County and is the largest congregation in West Virginia. In fact, it stands near the top among all the congregations of the brotherhood, with a membership in 1943 of one thousand one hundred ten. Its name is derived from the Big Sandy Creek flowing southward through its territory. It occupies parts of the Grant and Pleasant districts. Originally it embraced parts of Wharton and Henry Clay townships in Pennsylvania, and a small part of Garrett County, Maryland. However, in 1879 the territory in Pennsylvania and Maryland was cut off and organized into the Markleysburg congregation, now of the Western District of Pennsylvania. But it was agreed "at the time of the separation that those members living along the state line could still hold their membership in the Sandy Creek congregation if they so desired."<sup>15</sup> Many still do so. Actually the recently built Canaan church is just across the line in Pennsylvania, though still a part of the Sandy Creek congregation.

This congregation is the second oldest congregation in West Virginia continuing with an unbroken history from the beginning until now, though it is the oldest continuing under the same name. After the disastrous Eckerlin attempt at settling in Preston County (described elsewhere), the "next Brethren settlers were thought to be three families from the unfortunate South Branch church (also described elsewhere): Jacob, Martin, and Isaac Judy (who) settled on Sandy Creek about 1769, where they owned large farms. They induced other settlers to come, but it appears they sold out about the year 1800 and moved to Ohio."<sup>16</sup>

The third tide of Brethren immigration began soon after 1800. They were the sturdy German settlers who came to establish homes, schools, and churches. Likely work began somewhere about 1820 by Brethren from Pennsylvania. John Boger, the first minister known to be elected west of the Alleghenies, was

<sup>15</sup> Thomas, Jeremiah, *History of the Sandy Creek Congregation*.

<sup>16</sup> Henry, J. M., *Centennial Address, 1935*.

elected somewhere between 1830 and 1835. He spent the later years of his life studying prophecy. He published a treatise in 1846. This treatise fell into the hands of "Pastor" Russell and later become the foundation for the Millennial Dawn Church, or the Jehovah's Witnesses. Boger is buried near Shady Grove. Though no definite record of organization can be found it is generally accepted that by 1835 the congregation was in an organized condition. Jacob Thomas was elected to the ministry in 1836 and ordained to the eldership in 1841. He was a man of power in the pulpit and the work flourished under his preaching and eldership.

Next in order were Andrew Umbel and Michael M. Thomas. Then George Meyers was called who preached in German, but later went off with the sect led by George Shumaker (Shumakers) but in their decline he returned and preached for the Brethren again.

Philip J. Brown and Christian Harader were elected between 1850 and 1855. Following them were Samuel C. Umbel, Larkin Hall and James Bennett. Larkin Hall was a man of ability and a fine scholar who was a great debater. He had an all-night debate with the learned school teacher, Jacob Rush, who afterward became a minister in the Church of the Brethren. Bro. Hall later moved to Iowa. Philip Brown was also a man of considerable ability. He moved to Ohio and later went with the Progressive Brethren.<sup>17</sup>

Fleming C. Barnes was elected to the ministry in 1863 and remained in the congregation until his death. John S. Hook was also elected about the same time. Jacob Beeghly moved into the congregation from the Bear Creek congregation, Maryland, about 1856. Michael J. Thomas was called to the ministry about 1868, but later moved to Iowa and joined the Progressives. In 1874 Jacob Rush moved here from the Cheat River congregation. In 1875 Solomon Bucklew also moved here from the Cheat River congregation and labored here for over thirteen years. His coming was through the influence of Elder Jacob Thomas, who had been elder for thirty-five years and was then eighty years old. Joseph Guthrie was called to the ministry in 1880 and later ordained to the eldership.

On January 14, 1882, Jeremiah Thomas and John Baker were elected to the ministry. In a few years Bro. Baker moved to Illinois where he died. Bro. Thomas was promoted to the second degree of the ministry, July 4, 1885, and ordained to the elder-

<sup>17</sup> Thomas, Susie M., *History of Sandy Creek Congregation*, 1939.

ship March 23, 1889. Eld. Solomon Bucklew was now leaving the congregation and Bro. Thomas was given charge as presiding elder, and continued in that capacity until his death in 1934.<sup>18</sup>

George W. Van Sickle and Vestus Thomas were elected to the ministry before 1898. Bro. Thomas did very little preaching and was later relieved of the ministry. Bro. Van Sickle served faithfully until his death. Bro. Calvin R. Wolfe was elected to the ministry in 1905, but later moved to Pennsylvania. James W. Wolfe and Chester Thomas were elected to the ministry in 1913. Later both were ordained. Bro. Wolfe moved to California while Bro. Thomas serves at present as elder-in-charge of the congregation. Lloyd Liston was called to the ministry in 1918 and Walter Van Sickle was ordained in 1919. Bro. Van Sickle still serves in the congregation.

The congregation has had only four elders this far in the course of its history. Jacob Thomas became elder in 1841 and served until 1875. Solomon Bucklew was elder from 1875 to 1889, when the eldership went to the grandson of Jacob Thomas. This grandson, Jeremiah Thomas, held the eldership from 1889 to his death in 1934, when the mantle was laid upon the shoulders of the great-grandson, Chester Thomas, who still serves in that capacity.

The wonderful growth of the Congregation was due in large part to the marvelous work of Jeremiah Thomas, who was elected to the ministry at the age of 19, ordained at 28, and preached for 52 years. He baptized over 1,300 people, married 552 couples, anointed 253 sick persons, preached 1,068 funeral sermons, visited thousands of sick folks, and literally gave his life for the good of all. The Sandy Creek Congregation has been evangelistic and missionary in her message. More than 70 ministers have been invited to hold revivals, in addition to her local ministry. Such sainted leaders as John Kline, James Quinter, Samuel Fike and others have held meetings in the Salem Church. The congregation has liberally supported missions at home and abroad.<sup>19</sup>

The Salem church is the oldest house of worship. The old house was a building about forty by eighty feet, ten feet of one end being partitioned off for a kitchen. It was built about 1845; before this, services were held in schools, dwellings and barns. Love feasts were frequently held in large barns. The old Salem house was replaced by a new one in 1890, after having served

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Henry, J. M., *Centennial Address*. 1935.

its purpose for forty-five years. This new house is thirty-five by fifty feet in size, besides the kitchen. Later a wing, twenty-five by thirty-five feet, was built to it. The building now can accommodate three hundred fifty persons at communion.

The Mt. Dale house was built in 1896 and is equipped for communion services. The Mt. Grove house was built in 1900 and was remodeled in 1940. The Shady Grove house was built in 1913 and as the cemetery is near by, many funerals are held herein. The Canaan church was built in 1942. Besides these five houses the congregation has a one-third interest in two other churches: Union Center at Clifton Mills and Glade Union near Hazelton.

For many years it had been the custom to hold a revival at each church each year. A communion was held each year at two or more of the churches. The membership was visited before these communions. Sunday schools were started at an early date. There was also an interesting meeting called a "social and prayer meeting" described in the Gospel Messenger in 1898 by Bro. Jeremiah Thomas. It shows the alertness of the great spirit of Bro. Thomas. It rejoiced his heart to see the young people, so often then neglected, stand up and take their cross in helping with and leading these meetings. He observes that many who at first because of inexperience can scarcely offer public prayer or stand up and speak a single minute on a subject to edification will, through perseverance, become creditable speakers. This was a forerunner of the B.Y.P.D. of the present.

Since the fall of 1940 the church has been served by a pastor, Bro. Russell Showalter. For a time the Showalter family lived in the Thomas house in Bruceton Mills, but in 1942 a splendid parsonage was built near the Shady Grove church, and his residence is there. Under the leadership of Bro. Showalter many improvements have been made in the church buildings and there has been a large ingathering of souls. The congregation has been further unified and the work faces forward hopefully.

### SENECA

*Pioneer ministers:* John Kline, Samuel Fike, Asa Harman, Jonas Fike, John S. Fike, D. B. Arnold.

*Preaching place:* At Onego.

*Present minister:* Galen Fike.

*Date of organization:* 1890.

*Boundary line:* Beginning at a point on the Allegheny Mountain summit where the Tucker, Grant, Randolph, and Pendleton county lines meet, the line runs southerly with top of said mountain to the Randolph-Pocahontas county line, thence in a northeasterly air-line direction with the district line toward Petersburg to the Pendleton-Grant county line near Landes, thence westerly with said Pendleton-Grant county line to the starting point on the top of Allegheny Mountain.

There was evidently a good bit of church activity in this congregation before the Civil War. Brethren from Virginia were preaching here before that time regularly and this territory was included in that over which Elder John Kline had the general oversight. The following is taken from his records.<sup>20</sup> "Write letters to Brethren in Pendleton and Hardy counties to make appointments for preaching." That was July 2, 1852. On September 3, 1856, he spent the night at Isaac Carr's on North Fork and the next day had a meeting there.<sup>21</sup> On October 7, 1868, he spent the night at William Adamson's at the Mouth of Seneca. Again on September 3, 1859, he crossed the Branch Mountain from Upper Tract to William Adamson's at the Mouth of Seneca. He says, "Seneca is a small stream from the east side of the Allegheny Mt. falling into the North Branch of the South Branch of the Potomac. The scenery at the Mouth of Seneca is probably unsurpassed by any in Virginia. The perpendicular walls of solid rock hundreds of feet high present a scene of surpassing grandeur. Night meeting at the meeting house on Seneca. Subject, Luke 24: 46, 47."<sup>22</sup> He stayed the next night at Widow Cooper's near Harman.

Here and hereafter he refers to a meetinghouse on the Seneca and I have not been able to determine where it was. It must have been near Onego, as the distances and directions hereafter referred to seem to indicate. Kline spent the night of August 7, 1860, at Thomas White's near Harman. He says, on August 8, "Come to Seneca Meeting house (twelve miles). Luke 14 is read. Dine at Elburn's; stay all night at Ely Bland's (eight

<sup>20</sup> Funk, Benjamin, *Life of John Kline*. Page 305.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* Page 381.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* Page 421.

miles). . . . August 9. Come to Circleville on the North Fork . . . (seven miles). Meeting in Circleville."<sup>23</sup>

These Brethren from Virginia were crossing the Shenandoah Mountains into the Sweedlin Valley, Pendleton County, by 1835. There they preached regularly and from there pushed on into the South Branch Valley near Franklin, and then later through Upper Tract to the North Fork Valley and to Seneca. Bro. Kline and Bro. Jacob Wine went on their yearly visit prior to the "visit council" in 1864. After their return they were both arrested, but both were released after giving satisfactory accounts of their visits in West Virginia.

The congregation was turned over from the Virginia district and organized as a congregation of the First District of West Virginia in 1890 by Elders D. B. Arnold and Jonas Fike.

According to Sisters Joseph Miller and Fannie Huffman of Onego the following were the names of the members at that time: Mr. and Mrs. Salon Miller, Annie Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Miller, Lizzie George, Jane George, Polly Anne Morral, Fannie Bodkin, Mary Anne Morral, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bible, Mr. and Mrs. Edward McAvoy, Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Bible, Lettie Myers, Liza Cooper, Sadie Champ, Nola Jarden, Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Bible, Emma Bible, Laura N. Bible, Phoebe Ritchie, Jane Mallon, Mr. and Mrs. Wilber Mallon, Gilbert Morral, Emma Miller, Roda Miller, Mr. and Mrs. William Bible, Mrs. Sarah Waybright, Mr. and Mrs. Adam Kisamore, Mr. and Mrs. John Miley, Mrs. Eve Harman, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Harper, Mr. and Mrs. Alford Moyers, Sarah Jane Moyers, Isaac Wymer, Mary Wymer, Mr. and Mrs. Asa Wymer, Bessie Morral, Kennie Kisamore, Benjamin Moyers, Flora Moyers, Lula Moyers.

They then used the old Mennonite church on the Fork seven or eight miles below the mouth of the Seneca. This building was torn down and moved by the Mennonite people and then about 1906 the Brethren built a new church not far from where the old building stood. This was called the Evergreen church. It was burned down about 1925. The church at Onego was built about 1908.

Blanch Hewitt worked here, teaching school and being partly under the district mission board support, during the years 1917-

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* Page 437.

1918. Bro. and Sister Edward Ziegler were here under about the same conditions in 1924-1925, and Sister Ziegler had been there in the work a year or so before that.

Work at present is under the care of the district mission board with Bro. Galen Fike preaching there once a month. Evangelists and daily vacation Bible school workers do some work in there every summer. The active membership is small at present but there are some faithful ones carrying on.

#### SUNNYSIDE

*Pioneer ministers:* Joseph Arnold, George W. Leatherman, B. W. Smith, J. A. Parish (elected 1892), J. H. Baker (elected March 30, 1895), O. W. Johnson (elected April 22, 1922).

*Present ministers:* B. W. Smith (elder), Robert Hoover (pastor).

*Preaching place:* Church on U.S. Route 50, one mile east of New Creek.

*Date of organization:* 1889; reorganized in 1897.

*Boundary line:* Starting at a point on top of Knobley Mountain, just east of the reservoir, the line runs westerly in a direct line to the mouth of Stoney Run, thence upward with said Stoney Run to its headwaters, thence westerly in a direct line across the Allegheny Mountains to the North Branch of the Potomac, thence upward with said Potomac to the Grant County line, thence easterly with said county line to the top of Knobley Mountain, thence northerly with top of mountain to the starting point.

George W. Leatherman was born on Patterson Creek, Hampshire County, on July 2, 1835. His first marriage was to Mary Susan Whip of Patterson Creek (now Mineral County), who was the daughter of William and Sarah Whip. His second marriage was to Caroline Thrush. George and his family first lived near where he was born on the Patterson. After about five years he moved to Tucker County and then returned to Patterson Creek. About 1885, however, the family moved into the New Creek Valley and settled on a farm four miles south of Keyser. He was elected to the ministry in 1884 and ordained to the eldership not long afterwards. He died October 8, 1905, at the age of seventy years. He was elder of the Sunnyside congregation from its organization until his death. He and all deceased members of

his family except George, Jr., lie buried in the family burial ground on the farm in the New Creek Valley.

With him the work in the New Creek Valley must have begun. In 1891 he took the lead in building what was known as the Leatherman church, which was near his home. Later I. F. Roberts, John A. Parish and J. H. Baker were elected to assist him in the ministry. In March of the year in which Bro. Leatherman died, 1905, Bro. B. W. Smith moved from the Tear Coat congregation to Beaver Run. In the fall of that year he was elected to the eldership of the congregation and he has served in that capacity ever since—thirty-seven years. The church has flourished and is now a promising congregation.

The Leatherman church was torn down in 1919 and the Sunnyside schoolhouse was used for some time, as most of the membership then lived in that vicinity. In 1919 the schoolhouse and lot were purchased by Bro. J. H. McDonald and presented to the church as a place of worship. It was repaired and dedicated in 1925. Later a new brick structure was erected and dedicated October 2, 1938. In 1938 the New Creek congregation asked district conference for the privilege of changing the name to Sunnyside. That was granted.

For some time previous to 1923 services had been held in Keyser. In that year the Keyser congregation was formed from the northern part of the New Creek congregation, including the town of Keyser.

Deacons who have served are: Milton Baker (transferred from Greenland when the line was changed in 1928), A. A. Rotruck, W. A. Smith, J. W. Leatherman, Z. A. Leatherman, Ollie Green, Larry Develbiss, E. I. Roberts, Earl Roberts, Edgar Agnew, Harry Parrill, Cecil Metcalfe.

Bro. Earl Schnader served as summer pastor in 1942.

The Cross church, on the mountain eight miles west of Keyser, is a part of this congregation. The work was started there by Bro. Abernathy. The house is owned jointly by the Brethren, Methodists and United Brethren.

Bro. Robert Hoover was secured in 1944 to serve the Sunnyside, Beaver Run, and Knobley congregations jointly.

#### TEAR COAT

*Pioneer ministers: Abraham Miller, John Hockman, Jacob*

Beery, Newton Flory, Solomon Biser, D. B. Arnold, Dan Bucklew, A. B. Bucklew.

*Present ministers:* J. D. Beery, Oscar F. Bowman (pastor).

*Preaching places:* Church two miles east of Augusta; Union Chapel at Delroy on North River.

*Date of organization:* 1860 or before.

*Boundary line:* Beginning at a point on the South Branch of the Potomac River, at the magisterial district line between the Cabin Run and Frankfort districts and running up said river to a point south of U. S. Route 50, thence southeasterly to a point on Great North Mountain and Cacapon Mountains where the county lines of Hampshire and Hardy meet, thence northeasterly with the line between the districts of Northern Virginia and First West Virginia to a point east of the forks of Capon, thence westerly the line returns to the starting point on the South Branch River.

Abraham Miller of Levels was the first minister to preach here, according to Jacob Beery. He preached in the old Shickle school, four miles west of Augusta, about 1860. Brother and Sister Isaac Grapes, George Howdeyshell, and Sister—Sowers were some of the first members.

From Edgar Combs we learn that soon after the close of the war between the states William Detrich came into what is now the Tear Coat congregation and preached in the old Shickle schoolhouse, later known as Woodlawn. As a result of his preaching some of the Sowers family were baptized, one of whom was Grandma Sowers, who was a Shickle before marriage. James Peer and wife were baptized soon afterwards.

Two of the early pioneer preachers who came to Hampshire County and into the Tear Coat congregation were Daniel B. Arnold and Solomon Biser of Mineral County and from the Beaver Run congregation. It was mostly by their work that the Tear Coat congregation got started. They preached in the homes of the Brethren in the community and held love feasts in barns, where suitable. Some of these love feasts were held in the barn near Pleasant Dale, on the farm of Isaac Grapes, who was one of the early members of the congregation.

According to the History of Hampshire County, by Maxwell and Swisher, "Its origin dates back about forty-five years (to

1852). Several families connected with the church early emigrated from the Valley of Virginia to Pleasant Dale and Levels: Abraham Miller, Isaac Miller, William Roby, and Abraham Derrick who lived on the Levels, but finally moved to the West."

William Bucklew moved here from Rowlesburg sometime before 1880 and was the first resident minister. He was a master with the Bible. About 1880 John Hockman, Jacob Beery, and Newton Flory were elected to the ministry. Marcellus Bucklew, son of William, was also elected to the ministry and did some preaching, but finally went with the Old Order branch of the church.

As nearly as can be ascertained, the first church was built about 1875 on land donated by Isaac Grapes, and was located by the side of Tear Coat Creek about one-fourth mile down the creek from where Route 50 crosses this stream. There was a good spring of water there. Some of the brethren who were active in the building of this church were Isaac Grapes, Calvin Rogers, John Daugherty, John Flory, B. W. Smith, Newton Flory, W. H. Flory, Robert Wolford, John J. Wolford, D. A. Daugherty and B. J. Shanholtz.

This building was in use from that time until 1903 when a suitable location was secured from H. C. Cooper and the old church was torn down and rebuilt at the present location. This new church was dedicated in May 1905 by D. B. Arnold and E. T. Fike and was fully paid for when dedicated. E. T. Fike held a series of meetings at the new church following the dedication.

Work at Union Chapel was started by Bro. B. W. Smith about 1890. The work prospered and soon the church was built.

Some additional ministers who have labored in the congregation as evangelists are Jeremiah Thomas, Ezra Fike, Jonas Fike, Earle Wm. Fike, M. G. West, A. J. Beeghley, J. H. Cassady, Charles Wakeman, C. G. Hesse and R. G. West. Alonza Carter and Raymond Martin served as pastors. Elder Oscar Bowman is the present pastor and the work moves forward.

The following named brethren have entered the ministry in the congregation: B. W. Smith, I. J. Saville, J. D. Beery, D. B. Spaid, A. R. Spaid, C. E. Grapes, Homer McDonald, Dan Bucklew, A. R. Bucklew, S. P. Daugherty.

## TERRA ALTA

*Pioneer ministers:* Philip Brown, Jacob Brown, Jacob Thomas, James A. Ridenour, Jacob Rush, John A. Arnold, Sam A. Fike, Chalmers Glen, William Bucklew, Solomon Bucklew, John Freeland, Tobias Fike, Sam Sisler, and others.

*Present ministers:* Galen Fike (pastor), Chester Thomas, N. V. Leatherman.

*Preaching place:* White Dale church, one mile west of Terra Alta.

*Date of organization:* About 1855.

*Boundary line:* Beginning at a point near Hutton where the B. & O. Railroad crosses the state line, the congregational boundary runs thence westerly in an air-line to Amblersburg, thence southwesterly with said B. & O. Railroad to the Cheat River at Rowlesburg, thence northerly down Cheat River to the mouth of Big Sandy Creek, thence by an almost direct easterly air-line, passing through Valley Point, through Lennox to Orr, where it contacts the Sang Run Road, thence easterly with said road to the state line, thence south with the state line to the starting point at Hutton on the B. & O. Railroad.

About the year 1830 James Freeland settled on Nettle Ridge and hewed out a home in the wilderness. This land included parts of the farms of Elmer Arnold, George Freeland, Loy Au man, and W. B. Freeland of the present time. This ridge received its name from the great growth of nettles on the land, which was of black loam and timbered with white walnut, chest nut, ash, poplar, oak, and other trees.

James Freeland had married the daughter of Jacob Ridenour, who had come from Pennsylvania and settled in this vicinity. The Ridenours were members of the Church of the Brethren and when James Freeland married into that family he too espoused their faith and established a Brethren home. State and county historians<sup>24</sup> give the name of one James A. Ridenour, Dunker minister (who may have been a son or brother of the above Jacob Ridenour) as likely the first resident minister of this congregation, who lived here until about 1860 and then moved into the Sandy Creek congregation, later moving to Ohio and uniting with the Progressive branch.

<sup>24</sup> Wiley, *History of Preston County*. 1882.

About 1854 or 1855 Hiram Dodge, who married Savilla Ridenour, a sister of James Freeland's wife, purchased a tract of land north of and joining James Freeland's on which they established a home of the Brethren faith. This home is now owned by his son, Charles Dodge. About this time Jacob Hartsel and wife, both Brethren, came into the community and cleared the farm now owned in part by Mrs. Elias Bucklew, Spencer Whitehair's heirs, and George Lining. About 1853 Edward F. King married Mary Freeland, daughter of James Freeland, and established a Brethren home on the land now owned by Asa Wilhelm. Near the same time David A. Freeland, son of James Freeland, married Mary Smith, and established a Brethren home on land east of his father's, now owned by C. E. Markwood. This was the nucleus around which the Brethren faith started in this community.

About 1855 the people of the community, feeling the need of some community center building, pooled their resources for that purpose. Timber being plentiful and money scarce, they went into the woods, hewed out logs, dragged them together, and, all hands joining in hoisting them, they soon had a one-story log house large enough to hold one hundred people. David A. Freeland donated the ground and it stood on the exact spot now occupied by the Earl Bucklew residence. It supplied a much-felt need and was used for religious services, all denominations having equal privileges. Subscription schools were also held in it. Here James A. Ridenour, resident minister, preached. Soon after 1850 Philip Brown from Sandy Creek moved here and helped with the work, though he later moved to Ohio. Here also came Elder Jacob Thomas, from Sandy Creek, before and after this date. Elder Sam Fike from Eglon often came here. So we can say that at least by the time of the building of the house for services, 1855, the church was in a thriving condition with two resident ministers.

This building was filled with benches made of small chestnut logs, split in the middle, and the flat side smoothed off. Two holes slanting outward near each end held wooden pegs driven in for legs. When free schools were established in Preston County in 1867 this house was turned over to the board of education, but it continued to serve for religious services until 1876 when it was torn down and hauled away. The lot went back to

the land owner—now John M. Freeland, who became owner of his father's land.

A new Dunker, or the Freeland, church, as it came to be called, was erected in the years 1869-70. It was a large white frame building which would accommodate about five hundred people. David A. Freeland built the church with the assistance of Aaron Miller as workman and by donations from others. This congregation, then called the Cheat River congregation, was coming to its best. Its membership numbered around 100, making it then the largest congregation in West Virginia. Some of the members were: Edward King and family, David A. Freeland and family, James Freeland and family, the Jacob Hartsel family, Hiram Dodge and wife, Mrs. Daniel Whitehair and family, Mrs. Louisa C. Wilburn and others.

The church was dedicated in the autumn of 1870 with Elder Jacob Thomas officiating, assisted by Solomon Bucklew and others. Ministers then preaching here were Solomon Bucklew (resident here), William Bucklew, and still later C. E. Glen, Samuel Sisler, George Bucklew, Moses Fike, Aaron Fike, Jeremiah Thomas, Emra Fike, Thomas Rhodes (resident), John M. Freeland (resident), and others. Edward King, Jacob Hartsel, and George Wilhelm were deacons. Much preaching was being done in many near-by schoolhouses and groups of members grew up there. Solomon Bucklew, a blacksmith by vocation, was known far and wide. He was a very large, stout man of tremendous strength, with long curly hair. He was a saintly and godly man, reverenced by all, and made a very solemn, dignified, stately appearance in the pulpit. He had a pleasing, far-carrying voice. Religion was to him a thing of power and others felt that power when he preached. Thus he was described to me by an old resident of the community who knew him. He was moved to tears in loving remembrance as he spoke. Sam Sisler was rather active as an evangelist. The work of this congregation reached out to Washington Manor, Sisler school, Rhodes school, Freeland school, Mt. Carmel, and elsewhere.

Love feasts then were great religious festivals. They continued over a period of three days and drew five hundred or more communicants with one thousand or more attending. These came from Eglon, Sandy Creek and farther away. These hundreds would be cared for in the homes of the members, some

homes caring for thirty or forty visitors at night, bedding them on the floor. Then was the day of great Brethren fellowship. Sometimes services would be disturbed by drinkers among the nonmembers attending.

But now a sad note must enter. The evangelistic note gave way to one of dissension. The Progressive-Conservative debate and schism reached here. The church divided, about half of the Freeland group going with each side. Many of the Conservatives died or moved away and services were irregularly held by them in the old church. Shortly after the turn of the century services were entirely abandoned. In 1920 the building was sold, torn down, and moved away. The lot is now owned by C. E. Markwood.

A piece of land was donated to the Progressive group by W. L. and Lew White. This land is just west of the Terra Alta cemetery, between Route 7 and the road leading to the Freeland settlement. The White Dale church was built here by David A. Freeland, John M. Freeland, Solomon Fike, Elijah Hardesty, and others. It was dedicated in May 1895. Some of the charter members were: Rev. George Bucklew, Rev. J. M. Freeland, Rev. C. E. Glen, M. Katherine Glen, Mary Freeland, T. B. Jackson, Elizabeth Welch, Margaret Bucklew, Eva Jackson, S. K. Whitehair, Gillie Whitehair, Sue M. Dodge, Susan DeBerry, Retta Bucklew Wilson, J. B. Cassady, Sarah L. Whitehair, Savilla Dodge, Hiram Dodge and Louisa Wilburn.

Early ministers who served this church were George Bucklew, C. E. Glen, John M. Freeland, and S. K. Whitehair, all resident. Others were E. B. Shaver, J. M. Tombaugh, Henry Wise, D. C. Layman, A. E. Thomas, Edward Bardman, Thomas Howell, L. L. Lindower, Herman Hoyt and George McDonald, who served either as pastor or evangelist. As the years passed members moved away or died and the membership became too small to support a pastor.

During this time Elders J. A. Arnold, Obed Hamstead, Lorenzo Fike, Emra Fike, Tobias Fike and others of the Church of the Brethren were maintaining services at the older outlying preaching points of the Cheat River congregation. In 1920 the district mission board assumed some financial obligation to help supply a ministry to this congregation and Lorenzo Fike was continued

as elder. The congregation had reached its low point with a membership of only about twenty.

But now other new members of the Church of the Brethren began to move into Terra Alta, viz., the A. R. Fike family, Frank Guthrie and family, Melvin Slaubaugh, Revie Slaubaugh, and others. These were interested in maintaining their Brethren faith. In 1931 the elders of the district petitioned the district for a committee to investigate the advisability of discontinuing the congregation. Jeremiah Thomas, E. T. Fike, and J. S. Fike were named. But they became a committee for the building up of the congregation. Progress from year to year was reported. These of the Church of the Brethren had come to know the Progressive Brethren of the vicinity and their church at White Dale, which was struggling along. They discovered they had a rich heritage of Brethren faith in common. They began to work, plan, think, and worship together.

The district committee, now consisting of C. A. Thomas, J. S. Fike, and Alva Harsh, worked with the Terra Alta Brethren and a similar committee from the Progressives. They mutually agreed to have preaching twice a month at the White Dale church, the Brethren and Progressives each preaching once a month. C. A. Thomas was elected elder for the Church of the Brethren and N. V. Leatherman for the Progressives. This occurred in 1935. In that year district conference was petitioned for the privilege of changing the name of the congregation from Cheat River to Terra Alta. This was readily granted as the active thriving part of the congregation was now in Terra Alta.

In July 1936 Dr. C. A. Bame of the Progressives was called to White Dale to conduct a revival. He was delighted and most co-operative. Indeed, the whole Progressive branch had been much interested and helpful. Dr. Bame carefully studied the situation, consulted the membership, and then drew up a constitution uniting the two branches legally and fully. This constitution was adopted by both bodies of the church on July 25, 1936. The name became the Co-operative Brethren church of Terra Alta.

The denominational leadership of both branches has been much interested in encouraging this effort. Articles about this union have been published in the church papers of both branches. It has been studied by both branches. Both have

been most helpful and unselfish in their co-operation. The membership there is of "genuine good old-fashioned Dunker blood. They know why they are Brethren and are not easily moved from their convictions," said C. C. Grisso, a Progressive minister, in the *Gospel Messenger* for July 17, 1937. It is an example that could be profitably followed elsewhere.

Bro. Foster M. Bittinger served as part-time pastor for about eighteen months, beginning September 1939. Olonzo Fike then served them. Both of these ministers are of the Church of the Brethren. Usually an evangelist of the Progressive branch is secured. But utmost harmony exists between the branches. Visitors, lay or ministerial, say, "I wondered whether I could distinguish between the branches. I cannot."

Again, after much heartache, suffering, sacrifice, and sorrow, those of the Brethren faith of this vicinity look forward with hope and courage. They face a promising future. Galen E. Fike now serves as pastor.

#### WHITE PINE

*Pioneer ministers:* Nicholas Leatherman, Solomon Biser, Daniel B. Arnold, John M. Leatherman, Nelson Kelly, Crisley Wine, John Kline, Jacob Biser, James Fleming, Daniel Workman.

*Date of reorganization:* 1870. Possibly a large congregation by 1785 under the leadership of the Powers brothers. See page 30.

*Preaching places:* White Pine church, near Purgitsville; Kelly Chapel, near Russeldale; Old Pine church, one mile west of U. S. Highway 220, near Purgitsville (used now only for funerals).

*Present minister:* India Hockman.

*Boundary line:* Beginning at the point of the second high knob on the South Branch Mountain (near Old Fields) the line runs northeast with said mountain to above the headwaters of Grassy Lick River to the Tear Coat boundary line, thence with said boundary line northwest to the Mineral County line, described in the 1879 minutes of the Beaver Run church as follows: "Commence at Lions Mill, running across the mountain through Smacktown Gap, thence down the ridge east of Joshua Rinker's and Edward Whiteman's, crossing Mill Creek above

Elijah High's, thence up Sandy Hollow through the land of Harriet High, same course continued to county line, thence a straight line to Pearce's Mill, thence with top of Furnace Mountain (Patterson Creek Mountain) to Grant (now Mineral) County line," thence southwest with top of said mountain to a point where the three counties of Hardy, Grant and Mineral meet, thence easterly to the Mountain View school, thence with the Haggarty Road to U. S. Highway 220, thence easterly in a direct line to starting point, the second high knob on South Branch Mountain.

This congregation has been variously known as the Mill church, the Nicholas church, the Old Pine church, and now the White Pine congregation. Religious services were begun here at least by 1843 when Elder John Kline in August visited in the home of Bro. Nicholas Leatherman. He was certainly here again in June of 1858. In June of 1859 he was again on a preaching trip down South Mill Creek through what is now Purgitsville and on June 5 saw "what I have never seen before, viz., a killing frost in June. The corn up to knee high was frozen stiff, the heading wheat is frozen."<sup>25</sup> It affected the tone of his preaching.

From the History of Hampshire County, by Maxwell and Swisher, 1897, the following is gathered: "The Pine Church organization, partly in Hampshire and partly in Hardy, dates its organization from mission work done by the Beaver Run congregation. The Pine Church was formerly Nicholas, organized about 1870 by Dr. Leatherman, who entered the ministry near this time. Pine Church is owned in partnership by several churches but the Brethren are the largest shareholders."

The Old Pine church, a log church about thirty by thirty feet, standing about one-quarter mile off United States Highway 220, just south of Purgitsville, is the oldest church building of the Church of the Brethren in the entire district. Its exact age is unknown but old men of the community say it dates back to 1814. There are tombstones in the old cemetery dating back to 1834 and some unmarked graves which are said to be still older. These marked stones are of the Huffmans, who came there from Germany. Some old ones of the community say the church has been there for one hundred fifty years, which would make its building date at least as early as 1792. Could this be the place

<sup>25</sup> Funk, Benjamin, *Life of John Kline*. Page 414.

where the Powers built up the first Dunker community, the South Branch church, which met a rather fateful end? Perhaps so.

Certainly this church is very old. No one knows of its beginning. Certainly it marked a period of early activity of the church here. Mrs. Roby, who lived there at the time of the Civil War, has worshiped there ever since. She says that the church then appeared about as old as it does now. The church was built by the Methodists, the United Brethren, and the Church of the Brethren, though now all have built other churches. This church is used now only for funerals or reunions. It was originally of bare logs though sometime later it was weatherboarded. It is said that Rev. Charles Miller, a United Brethren preacher, during the Civil War always brought his gun to church and left it outside the door. The tension between the sections was at this place very high, as is thereby shown.

Dr. Nicholas Leatherman was born November 4, 1826, and married Catherine Arnold, daughter of Jacob Arnold of Beaver Run. He was a physician and he and his good wife traveled all over the country roads in buggy or spring wagon or on horseback to care for the sick.<sup>26</sup> He was also a minister and elder in the church and as seen before he is given credit for organizing the church at White Pine about 1870, at which time he was placed in the ministry. He died in 1890.

But even so, Bro. Nicholas Leatherman, of Westernport, Maryland, long a resident of the White Pine congregation, says that before the eldership of Nicholas Leatherman was the eldership of Solomon Biser. So the date of 1870, usually accepted, seems not early enough. Bro. Casper Roby says that the Old Pine church building dates back to 1814. See the section on the South Branch church, page 30.

The White Pine church was built in 1907 and dedicated in September of that year, with Bro. E. T. Fike preaching the dedicatory sermon. It was remodeled and enlarged and rededicated in November 1939, with Bro. C. O. Showalter preaching the sermon. Active church services are carried on here.

The Kelly Chapel building was erected in 1914 by Elder H. N. Kelly, a prosperous farmer and stock raiser of Russeldale. He built it with his own money on his own land. This church was

<sup>26</sup> All Leatherman Kin History. Page 537.

dedicated on November 11, 1914, with Bro. Jonas Fike preaching the sermon. It was enlarged and rededicated in July 1941 with Bro. A. R. Showalter preaching the sermon.

This church consistently has been one of the strong churches of the district since its founding. It has been served by the pioneer ministers mentioned above, also by I. L. Hockman, John M. Leatherman, John R. Leatherman, Raymond Martin, B. W. Smith, Willie Bane, Albert Arnold and others.

#### WILEY FORD

*Pioneer ministers:* A. J. Whitacre, D. W. Tusing.

*Present ministers:* Vernon Shanholtz, D. W. Tusing.

*Preaching place:* Church in Wiley Ford.

*Date of organization:* 1940.

*Boundary line:* At the meeting with the elders on December 1, 1940, a committee from the Wiley Ford and Old Furnace churches was appointed to decide on a boundary line. The following was submitted and approved.

Beginning at a point on the Potomac River just below Melt-enburger Island, at the House Rocks, the line runs directly westward across Knobley Mts. to said Potomac River at the Knobley Rocks near the Fair Grounds, thence it follows same said river downward to the starting point.

Committee:

H. M. Grapes,  
E. F. Powell.

Prior to 1927 the United Brethren church had been having Sunday school and church services at the old schoolhouse. But after the school was burned about that time they had no more services. The school board then asked Elder A. J. Whitacre to take up church services and he did. On April 22, 1927, a Sunday school was organized by the Brethren. D. W. Tusing was the first superintendent of the Sunday school and continued in that capacity for a number of years. J. E. Whitacre held a revival there in the Dixie school in 1929 and as a result twenty-nine were baptized. R. K. Miller, J. S. Fike, M. L. Riggelman, and W. W. Bane held meetings soon thereafter. The work then suffered loss when some of the Whitacres moved away.

The few years preceding 1937 were very discouraging and many were urging that the work be given up, but largely

through the faithfulness of Bro. D. W. Tusing it held on. Then in 1937 Rev. Vernon Shanholtz moved into the community. In 1938 D. W. Tusing was placed in the ministry. Other members moved into the community and since then the work has been growing.

Services were held in the school, but a church building was much needed. The basement part of the new church was built in 1938 and dedicated on December 18, 1938, by C. O. Showalter, then elder of the Old Furnace congregation. B. W. Smith then held a revival following the dedication and three were baptized. With the new church house the work began a real growth.

Since the membership and the leadership were almost entirely from the village of Wiley Ford it was for some time felt that the work could prosper best if they were organized as a separate church and recognized as such. Therefore they placed a petition at the 1940 district conference for a committee of elders to meet with them at the Old Furnace church and advise what seemed best. This was granted. The committee met at the Old Furnace church on December 1, 1940, and after careful and prayerful consideration gave the following as their findings:

With grateful respect for the good work done at Wiley Ford by such men as Eld. A. J. Whitacre and others; with proper recognition of the growing work at Wiley Ford and their peculiar problems; and with best wishes and prayers for the continued Christian growth of the Old Furnace territory, we believe the cause of the church and Kingdom can best be served by a new congregational organization at Wiley Ford and recommend such.

Committee: E. T. Fike, chairman, N. A. Seese, Ezra Fike, B. W. Smith, Foster M. Bittinger, secretary.

On that same day it was voted that Elder C. O. Showalter be elder-in-charge of the Wiley Ford congregation and Amos Lambert clerk. With that organization the new congregation came into being. The committee on boundary lines later reported as given above, with McKinley Grapes representing Old Furnace and Earley Powell representing Wiley Ford. If they could not agree they were to choose a third member.

The church basement had been in use since 1938. It had been built thirty-four by fifty feet, of concrete blocks, with the intention of adding the superstructure when they were able. In 1937 there was a membership of twenty-one. Now it is one hundred. During that time the Sunday-school enrollment has more than doubled. The old debt was paid off so the needed edifice was

brought to completion in 1942. The second story was added and a double story vestibule entrance was added. Stained glass windows portraying the life of Christ were used. A baptistry and Sunday-school rooms were included, also a sanctuary with a seating capacity of one hundred seventy-six. This beautiful building was dedicated April 19, 1942, with A. R. Showalter preaching the sermon and other church groups and ministers from near by assisting.

Now with a splendid building, Vernon Shanholtz, pastor, A. R. Showalter as elder, and many other faithful workers, the church goes forward.

## CHAPTER V

### UNIFYING THE WORK IN WEST VIRGINIA

To Brethren Valentine and Martin Powers and their congregation on the South Branch in 1785 was sent a committee to set them in harmony with the church and her stand on war and oath taking. Another committee was sent in the year 1790. So by that time the church in what is now the First District of West Virginia must have been pretty well known in the brotherhood.

The district was represented on Standing Committee at the Conference of 1814, at Pipe Creek, Maryland, by Brethren Samuel Arnold and Daniel Arnold. They also represented at the Conference at Daniel Reichard's, Washington County, Maryland, in 1826. Daniel Arnold represented at the Conference at Linville Creek, Virginia, in 1837, at the Morrison Cove Conference, Bedford County, Pennsylvania, in 1840, and at the Somerset County Conference, Ohio, in 1841.

Here follows the more recent representation at Conference: 1871, Martin Cosner; 1872, Martin Cosner; 1873, Martin Cosner; 1874, Martin Cosner; 1875, Elias Auvil; 1876, D. B. Arnold; 1877, Sam. A. Fike (up to this time the First and Second districts were together); 1878, D. B. Arnold; 1879, Solomon Bucklew; 1880, Jacob Thomas; 1881, D. B. Arnold; 1882, D. B. Arnold; 1883, Sam A. Fike; 1884, Solomon Bucklew; 1885, D. B. Arnold; 1886, Asa Harman; 1887, Solomon Bucklew; 1888, D. B. Arnold; 1889, D. B. Arnold; 1890, Aaron Fike; 1891,—; 1892, George S. Arnold; 1893,—; 1894, Jeremiah Thomas; 1895, D. B. Arnold; 1896, Tobias Fike; 1897, G. S. Arnold; 1898, B. W. Smith; 1899, Jeremiah Thomas; 1900, G. S. Arnold; 1901, Jeremiah Thomas; 1902, G. S. Arnold; 1903, Jeremiah Thomas; 1904, Solomon Bucklew, T. S. Fike; 1905, G. S. Arnold; 1906, Jeremiah Thomas; 1907, D. B. Arnold; 1908, Jeremiah Thomas; 1909, Emra Fike; 1910, A. W. Arnold; 1911, E. T. Fike; 1912, Jeremiah Thomas; 1913, E. T. Fike; 1914, J. S. Fike; 1915, Jonas Fike; 1916, Ezra Fike; 1917, B. W. Smith; 1918, L. H. Fike; 1919,—; 1920, E. T. Fike; 1921, E. T. Fike; 1922, Obed Hamstead; 1923, C. E. Grapes; 1924, C. E. Grapes; 1925, Ezra Fike; 1926, A. S. Arnold; 1927, E. T. Fike; 1928, R. G. West; 1929, B. W. Smith; 1930, Chester Thomas; 1931, W. W. Bane; 1932, Earl Fike; 1933, Jeremiah Thomas; 1934, R. K.

Miller; 1935, Ezra Fike; 1936, E. T. Fike; 1937, D. B. Spaid; 1938, Chester Thomas; 1939, F. M. Bittinger, S. P. Daugherty; 1940, Raymond Martin; 1941, N. A. Seese; 1942, Raymond Martin; 1943, R. K. Showalter, A. R. Showalter; 1944, A. S. A. Holsinger, Oscar Bowman.

Prior to 1866 the Standing Committee was appointed by the elders of the church where the meeting was held, they to receive all papers sent by the churches and to supply them with answers to be considered by the open Conference. The honor of originating our district meetings is claimed by D. H. Zigler<sup>1</sup> for Virginia, which asked for such a division by a query in 1856.

#### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The great field of religious education had its origin in the district in the year 1902. Prior to that date there was much religious teaching in the church but no records or reports were made of it. At the White Pine church on October 17, 1903, George S. Arnold, the district Sunday-school secretary, gave a report of the work done in 1902 as follows: number of church houses in district, nineteen; number of preaching places, sixty-nine; number of Sunday schools, thirty-two; total enrolled in Sunday school, one thousand three hundred thirty-eight. At this meeting they asked the Sunday-school secretary to go places where Sunday schools were needed, work up sentiment in favor of them, and wherever possible organize. His traveling expenses were paid by the district mission board.

The following year the Sunday-school secretary reported an increase of six in the number of preaching places. Four new Sunday schools had been organized with an increase in enrollment of three hundred ten. On October 20, 1906, at the Salem church, reports were given by Allie D. King of Eglon and J. B. Leatherman of Burlington, east and west secretaries. These reports were encouraging.

The temperance work was started in 1911 in the district. At the Knobley church, German Settlement petitioned district meeting to appoint a temperance committee. Jeremiah Thomas, Ezra Fike, and Lillie Moore were the first temperance committee in the district. In one year the committee had local committees

<sup>1</sup> Zigler, D. H., *History of the Brethren in Virginia*. Page 66.

in nine congregations. Bro. Quincy Leckrone lectured in almost all of the congregations. Much temperance literature had been distributed.

On October 23, 1914, at the Salem church the first district peace committee was appointed in the persons of Emra T. Fike, A. W. Arnold, and Chester Thomas. They wrote President Wilson a letter of approval and praise for his peace efforts. The following year each congregation was asked to appoint a peace committee and hold peace programs. All were urged to send letters to senators and representatives, disapproving the increase of armament and the supplying of money and ammunition to warring nations. The year before the war closed, the peace committee was encouraged by the stand taken by many young Brethren who were drafted. All churches were asked to pray earnestly for those who were drafted. It was recommended that two Brethren full of faith and love be appointed to confer with and advise them if necessary and, if allowed, support the work outlined by the advisory committee to conscientious objectors. G. S. Arnold and E. T. Fike were appointed.

On October 8, 1921, in the Keyser church the peace committee presented a letter commending President Harding for calling the disarmament conference. The letter was approved and sent. In 1930 Dove Fike became the peace representative. She was able to get programs in sixteen churches and a total of four hundred forty peace pledges signed in two years' time.

In 1914 the temperance committee made the following statement: "Though the state is now dry the work is not yet done." How well the citizens of the present day can appreciate that statement!

At the Beaver Run church in 1923 the Sunday-school board's name was changed to the board of religious education. This board co-operated with Minor C. Miller in holding a four-day training school in Keyser. Two years later the temperance, purity, peace, and child rescue committees merged into one board. The board gave their regrets through district meeting that Bro. Minor C. Miller was making his exodus as director of religious education. The board called for some means of financing the work. It was decided that each congregation was to lift a liberal offering and send it to the board of religious education.

In the Eglon church on October 9, 1926, this board was reor-

ganized with Dr. B. B. Miller chairman, H. E. Arnold secretary-treasurer, Jesse Arnold east side assistant, D. B. Spaid west side assistant, and R. G. West director. The director was to be the field worker for the district, having oversight of the religious educational work of the district, and by virtue of his office was to become district representative on the regional board and serve on the executive committee of the state council of religious education. Bro. Ezra Flory held the training school in Keyser in 1926.

The next year was one of great activity in religious education in the district. Six vacation Bible school teachers were working in the district. Five training schools were held. The Church of the Brethren took over a sixty-acre tract of land in the Blue Ridge Mountains as a site for Camp Bethel, a camp for the youth and intermediates of the church. Keyser had a co-operative Bible school with twenty-five teachers and workers and two hundred children enrolled.

For the last ten years the vacation Bible schools and training schools have been emphasized by this board. Many of the churches have sponsored schools of this nature. State standards of rating the Sunday schools were purchased and sent to each superintendent in the district for use in his school. A pamphlet, *What a Young Christian Ought to Know*, was bought and given to all ministers and Christian workers desiring it for use in instructing young converts in the churches. This work must continue. If the Christian church meets the needs of today it must be a dynamic body. The uniting of individuals in a great co-operative movement demands a great efficient educational program through the department of Christian education.

#### CAMP GALILEE

In this generation great interest in more training in the Christian way of life is being manifested. The youth camps have become an important institution. This youth training program was begun in the First District of West Virginia at the memorial grove at the orphanage, near Eglon, in conjunction with the Western District of Maryland. It was then later taken to the Maple Spring church. This continued for the space of about ten years. But the program grew in importance and it was felt that more adequate provision was needed.

The two districts considered a tract of land and water of about one hundred acres near Terra Alta, West Virginia. This was bought and incorporated September 22, 1938. It was organized as follows: president, C. O. Showalter; vice-president, Arthur Scrogum; secretary, Revie Slaubaugh; treasurer, Arnold Ludwick. In 1940 a constitution was adopted and O. P. Jones became manager. The camp has become a self-supporting institution and the indebtedness is now paid off. It has become an institution of great power in influencing and directing Christian life in the scores it reaches each year.

### COUNCIL OF BOARDS

On February 27, 1939, the boards of the district met in the home of Ezra Fike at Eglon. There it was decided that these boards should meet together annually or semiannually to plan their work and be known as the council of boards. The president of men's work, the president of women's work, the children's worker, and the president of the young people's department were also to become members of the council. At this meeting Bro. Foster Bittinger was selected for field director for one year.

### WOMEN'S WORK

We have no record of any organization within our district until 1920, when with Mrs. Jesse Harsh as district secretary, the following organizations were made.<sup>2</sup> In October 1920 the women of Keyser organized an aid society with the following promoters: Mrs. Lucy Roderick, Mrs. Annie Cheshire, and Mrs. Nora Ludwick. One of their major projects was paying for the new pews for the church, which amounted to about one thousand dollars. They also gave to missions and the orphanage.

By January of 1921 there was an aid organized in the Sandy Creek congregation. Mrs. Jeremiah Thomas, Mrs. James Wolfe, and Mrs. Victor Wilson were among the first officers. This organization represented the Salem and Bruceton Mills members. In October 1921 the Glade Union members organized with Mrs. Frank Guthrie, Mrs. David Van Sickle, and Mrs. S. F. Guthrie as the first officers.

The Eglon congregation organized an aid society about this

<sup>2</sup> From records compiled by Mrs. Frank Guthrie.

time, with Mrs. Carrie King, Mrs. Etta Bittinger, and Mrs. Virgie Fike as the first officers. The Bethel church, of the White Pine congregation, organized in 1923 with Mrs. Foster Arnold and Mrs. Mary Hinkle as the first officers.

At a district conference at the Brick church Mrs. Ezra Fike called for a district meeting of the women, and a district aid, under the name of women's work, was organized. An organization of the district was effected with Mrs. A. S. A. Holsinger as the first president and Mrs. Frank Guthrie as the first secretary and treasurer. Soon there were district reports from nine organizations. In 1939 there were reports from fifteen organizations.

These groups have supported every undertaking of the district or brotherhood. They have helped the work of missions, Brethren Service, the orphanage, Camp Galilee, the peace work, and the temperance work. They have attempted to share the abundant life of Christ with the whole world.

#### MISSION BOARD

Just when the district had its first mission board, available records do not show, but the district meeting minutes of 1888 show reports from the various congregations for home missions as follows: Beaver Run, \$37.15; Allegheny, \$29.00; German Settlement, \$10.

By 1902 there was an organized mission board and in that year T. S. Fike, Jeremiah Thomas and Joseph Guthrie were to work with the mission board to effect a plan whereby more successful mission work might be done in the district. Since that time this board has assisted in promoting religious education and in supplying needy points with preachers of the gospel. This assistance has been given especially in the Capon Chapel, North Fork, Red Creek, Cheat River, Petersburg, and Greenland congregations. This has enabled these and other congregations to have at times part-time pastors, evangelists, Bible schools, and ministers to fill regular appointments. In 1933 the district decided that all congregations receiving aid from the mission board shall not procure evangelists with whose expense the board is to help without first securing the consent of the board.

The district is made up of many isolated congregations and

the task of giving supervision and aid is a demanding one. The fields are white. The harvest is ready. The call is for workers.

### MINISTERIAL BOARD

The minutes of 1919 are the first to contain a report from the district ministerial board, though this board had been organized for some time. It reported that year a good prospect for young ministers. Since 1917 eight young brethren had been elected to the ministry and five elders ordained. Their report in 1928 showed a membership in the district of two thousand four hundred thirty-four, thirty-five church houses, fifty-one preaching points, twenty-five elders, twenty-five installed ministers and five licensed ministers. By 1943 the membership had increased to four thousand three hundred eighty-six, which speaks well for the work of the church and her ministry.

The work of the ministry in West Virginia has been always a sacrificial work. Many pioneer ministers traveled many hundreds of miles and served the church faithfully with never a single cent of remuneration. But it has been a blessed work. There is a great need yet for young ministers who are willing to serve with sacrifice and consecration these many churches and find part-time support in other fields. That seems to be the only hope for some of these outlying churches. Who will answer? Will the devotion of coming generations match that of those past? That is the challenge of history.

### THE ORPHANAGE

After some discussion the elders' meeting in 1914 recommended that the district conference appoint a child rescue committee to work out some way to help homeless children. The committee was appointed and made an effort to get child rescue committees in every congregation. In this it was not entirely successful but it did generate much interest in the field.

This interest grew until in 1919 the Eglon congregation petitioned the district to consider the advisability of owning a receiver's home for homeless children. At that conference the child rescue committee was empowered to work with the Western District of Maryland and the Second District of West Virginia, if they desired to co-operate, and to investigate the possibility of owning such a home. Next year the committee rec-

ommended that a home as close to Maple Spring as possible be provided. In 1921 the committee reported the purchase of the Charlie Jones farm, near Eglon, at a cost of \$8,000 which was apportioned among the three districts as follows: First West Virginia, \$4,000; Second West Virginia, \$2,000; Western Maryland, \$2,000. The home was dedicated and opened for children on May 21, 1921, and was to be controlled by the Brethren of these three districts. The house was enlarged and made suitable for a children's home and many children were cared for and through it many were placed in private homes. In 1931 through the liberality of the people of Terra Alta the beautiful grove adjoining the home was purchased and an auditorium thirty by seventy-two feet was erected, furnishing a place for reunions and conferences.

Gradually difficulties arose: states passed laws making it difficult to pass children across state lines, exacting requirements had to be met in order to keep state licenses, there were fewer calls for children to be placed in homes, and finally it was being felt that the best interests of children could be met in private homes. Therefore, it was recommended in 1940 that the home be closed and sold. By 1942 the home had been sold to Clifford Feather for \$4,000, which amount was to be divided among the three districts in the same ratio as they put funds into the home. Some of this money found its way into the second major venture of the district in behalf of its children and youth, that at Camp Galilee, and as such continues to serve a great purpose.

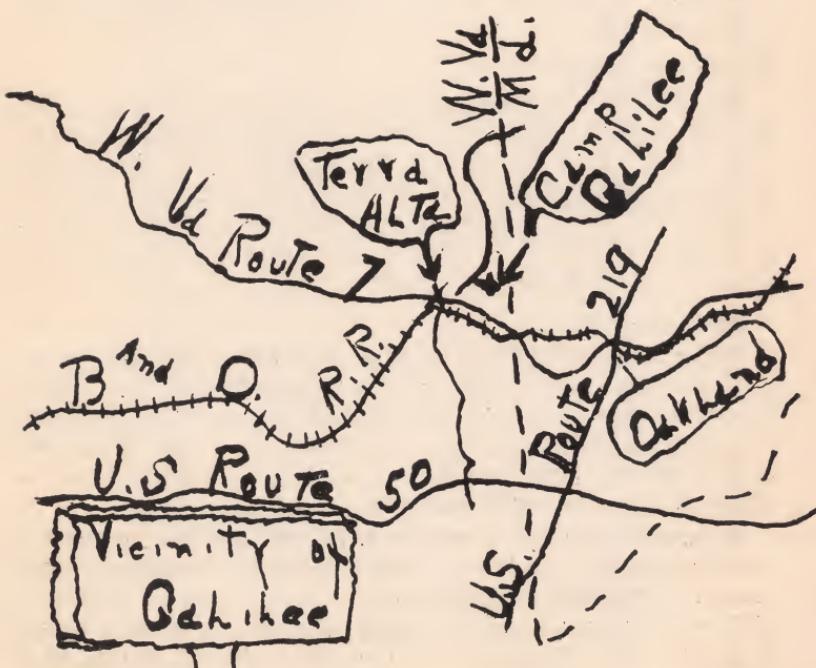
#### MEN'S WORK

Men's work was first introduced into the First District of West Virginia in July 1932 when Rev. M. J. Brougher of Greensburg, Pennsylvania, together with a number of the men of his local men's organization, met with the men of the First Church of the Brethren in Keyser for the purpose of effecting an organization in the Keyser congregation.

A little later, August 30, 1932, an organization was formed with Charles D. Ludwick chairman, Charles Bobo vice-chairman, and T. F. Vernon secretary-treasurer. At that meeting a constitution and by-laws were also written and approved. Charles Bobo was chosen as delegate to represent men's work at the regional conference to be held at Bridgewater that year. He was

appointed by that conference to be the district director of men's work in First West Virginia. In that capacity he served until the fall of 1940 when Melvin Slaubaugh was chosen for the place. The men of the district have done a great deal of service for the church, and have developed a good fellowship, which has been fostered by an annual district fellowship banquet.

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## CHAPTER VI

### BIOGRAPHIES

#### *Abernathy, Isaac W.*

Isaac, the son of J. W. and Hannah Abernathy, was born April 28, 1852, near Barnum, West Virginia. He was married on June 4, 1873, to Sophia Savage. He was a member of the Church of the Brethren for a long number of years and served as an elder for about forty-six years. His death occurred on June 6, 1925, and his funeral was from the Fairview church, near which he had lived most of his life. Two children, Arthur S. and Elma Carola, preceded their parents in death. One grandson, Keith A. Abernathy, survives.

#### *Abernathy, James*

In 1854 Bro. Abernathy moved to near Wilsons Mills, above Bayard, West Virginia, and there in 1856 he was baptized by John Kline. That was then in the bounds of the German Settlement (Eglon) congregation and he did much preaching in that vicinity. He had a son, Isaac, who was also a minister, but his ministry was more in the Fairview congregation, after that section went with Western Maryland.

#### *Arnold, Albert S.*

Elder A. S. Arnold, son of John S. and Susanna Shaffer Arnold, was born May 5, 1862, in what is now the Fairview congregation, Western Maryland, but was then a part of the First District of West Virginia. Albert was twelve years old at the time of his father's death and as a dutiful son he contributed his labors to keep the family together.

He united with the church in April 1881 and lived faithful to that faith until the end of life. He was elected as deacon in 1893, elected as minister in 1897, advanced to the second degree in 1897, and ordained as elder in 1906. He was united in marriage to Lizzie Fike, daughter of Peter Fike, Jr., of Eglon, West Virginia.

During his early ministry he served in the home congregation, Eglon, and elsewhere, keeping appointments on horseback or walking, braving all kinds of inclement weather. While he

was away his family kept the work going, and he often encouraged them, saying they did it better than if he had been there. He never refused to go when called. He was obedient to the church. His records show that he baptized two hundred eighty-two persons, solemnized thirty-nine marriages, and preached nearly one hundred funerals.

In 1915 he accepted a call to a place of greater need in the White Pine congregation, where there were fewer ministers. This church he served and labored with until his death on August 8, 1938. Death came to him in the stillness of the night at his son Jesse's home in Petersburg, West Virginia, after a day in seeming good health attending the memorial service for Alva Harsh at Maple Spring.

Their home was blessed with four sons and three daughters. They are Julius (deacon), Harvey (minister), Elma Helmick, Mary Hinkle, Jesse (deacon), Foster, and Anna Ferribee. A fifth son died in infancy.

#### *Arnold, A. W.*

Bro. A. W. Arnold was born and reared in the Arnold families of Beaver Run, and served for some time in the ministry in West Virginia. For a number of years now, however, he has been serving in the West. At present he is at Phoenix, Arizona.

#### *Arnold, Benjamin*

Bro. Benjamin was a son of Deacon Zechariah Arnold, one of the original Arnolds who came to Beaver Run, and one of a family of seven sons and two daughters. To him and his wife, Margaret, were born four sons: Michael, Elder Daniel B., Taylor, and George S., also a minister. The two minister sons were much more widely known than the father.

#### *Arnold, Charles Edward*

Oldest son of Elder Daniel B. Arnold, Charles was born May 13, 1866. He made good use of his opportunities, for at the age of seventeen he had a first-grade teacher's certificate and was teaching school. At nineteen he entered Bridgewater College, and later attended Ohio Normal University. In 1893 he accepted the chair of mathematics at McPherson College, Kansas, and in 1896 was called to the presidency of that institution, occupying it with the hearty approval of the faculty, students, and trustees.

In September 1891 he married Ella Beahm and to this union two children, Ruth and Russell, were born.

Religiously he was an example to all. At nineteen he accepted Christ and became active in Sunday-school work. In 1894 at McPherson he was called to the ministry and four years later was ordained to the eldership, but the field of his special delight was always educational. His life was short and on May 31, 1902, he passed away and was buried within sight of the college he served.

*Arnold, Daniel B.*

Daniel B., son of Benjamin and Margaret Arnold, must have been born before 1850. His father and his younger brother, George S., were also ministers. Their home was on Beaver Run in Hampshire County.

Bro. Arnold was a very active minister in the district, traveling much to preach the gospel in needy churches. He also served much in district capacities and often on Standing Committee. He was much loved and respected everywhere. His death came in 1914 at his later home at Eglon.

*Arnold, George S.*

The Arnold family is one of the first to bring the Church of the Brethren to West Virginia. The grandfather of George, Zechariah, moved from Frederick, Maryland, to Manorland, now Beaver Run, about 1785, together with two brothers and two sisters. The father of George, Benjamin, was a minister. Of his family of four sons, two were ministers, Daniel and George.

George S., son of Benjamin and Margaret Arnold, was born March 30, 1853, and died at the ripe age of eighty-three years, six months and twenty-one days. On April 20, 1880, he and Lydia Glick of Virginia were married, and in her he found an ever-true helpmeet, pleasant, sweet, and modest. This union was blessed with one daughter, Bessie, who married Elder A. S. A. Holsinger. This home was always open to any church worker or other person who chose to enter.

Bro. Arnold dedicated his life to the Lord at the age of twenty-one. The church, noting his talent and his devoted life, called him to the ministry at the age of twenty-three, and ordained him to the ministry in 1891. He served faithfully in every capacity of church service, both in the congregation and

in the district, serving eleven years on the district ministerial board.

At twenty-one years of age he entered the normal school at Fairmont and completed his work there in 1879. He taught school for many years, served as superintendent of schools of Mineral County from 1883-1893 and 1899-1911, a total of twenty-two years. Upon his voluntary retirement he was presented with a beautiful chair by the teachers of the county and with a most beautiful tribute to his faithful service and gentlemanly Christian character. On his eightieth birthday he received over two hundred greetings.

He was known as the sweet singer in Israel, a most lovable character, always manifesting a humble and forgiving spirit under trying circumstances. His funeral was conducted on October 25, 1936, by Elders B. W. Smith and E. T. Fike from the Beaver Run church. He was one of the fine leaders of the church in West Virginia and an outstanding citizen of Mineral County.

*Arnold, Harvey E.*

Harvey Elza, second son of Elder Albert S. and Lizzie Fike Arnold, was born near Eglon, West Virginia, November 5, 1889.

He prepared himself for teaching by attending the elementary schools and summer schools at Terra Alta. Then he taught four terms of school, three of which were in the home school, where he had among other pupils: Mrs. E. K. Ziegler, missionary to Africa; Foster M. Bittinger, pastor at Westernport, and Desmond Bittinger, present editor of the *Gospel Messenger*.

Always Harvey loved the church and served in every way possible—in the Sunday school, the music department, the young people's department and the ministry. On June 14, 1911, he was married to Malinda Vought of Salisbury, Pennsylvania, and to this union were born five daughters and one son (deceased). In 1916 the family moved to Old Fields, West Virginia, where they were active in the work of the church and in the ministry, to which Harvey was called in 1918. In 1919 they moved to Keyser, where he was ordained to the eldership in 1928, serving that congregation as elder. In 1932 the family moved to Meyersdale, Pennsylvania, where he is at present associate elder of the congregation. Not having opportunity to prepare for the full-time ministry he has served mostly through the Sunday school and other church activities but he has served willingly and gladly.

*Arnold, John A.*

Bro. John A. Arnold was born April 27, 1858. He was married on May 18, 1884, to Mary S. Fike, who died October 28, 1892. He married Fannie Good on August 5, 1897. He was elected deacon in 1891, elected to the ministry in 1893, advanced to the second degree in 1894, and ordained to the eldership in 1905. He died April 4, 1932. He served the church most at Friends Gap on Laurel Mountain, Lime Rock, Sugarland, Red Creek, and Dry Fork, as well as at other mission points.

*Arnold, Joseph*

Bro. Joseph Arnold was a very active minister and elder in the days of John Kline's work in West Virginia, and in the years following. His name is mentioned in connection with the start of many struggling churches in the district. He traveled far and wide but his work centered around the Beaver Run congregation and environs. He was born in 1799, elected to the ministry in 1836, ordained in 1841, and died in 1876.

*Arnold, Peter*

Bro. Peter Arnold was born in 1840, of the Arnold families on Beaver Run. He, like others of the Arnolds, was rather active in the ministry.

*Arnold, Samuel*

Elder Samuel Arnold was one of a family of Arnolds of German descent, living in the Middletown Valley, Maryland, near Frederick. About the year 1785 he with others of the family, Zechariah, Dan, Catherine, and Charity, moved to what is now known as Beaver Run, then called Manorland, near Burlington, West Virginia. There Samuel married Mary Ludwig and to them were born two sons and ten daughters, of whom Magdalene Arnold Fike was one. He is said to have owned the first top buggy in the vicinity and people came for miles to see it. On March 29, 1831, he had a span of colts hitched to the buggy and they became frightened and, running away, killed him.

He was a minister of great activity, traveling afar to preach, and was the first minister of the Church of the Brethren to preach in the environs of the Eglon congregation. He was known as the preacher with a beard.

In the cemetery on the ridge east of Beaver Run Valley Bro.

Arnold was buried. The first sandstone marker has been replaced by one of more modern design, but it is still used as a marker at the entrance to show the grave of a great pioneer of the church in West Virginia.

This may be said of his children: John died young; Jacob married Sarah Wine and later Sarah Ogg; Magdalene married Peter Fike; Nancy married Jacob Garber; Hannah married Jacob Biser; Susan married Nicholas Biser; Betsy married John Ogg; Christina married Dan Livengood; Rebecca married John Leatherman; Lydia married George High; Mollie married John Fleming; Catherine married John Long. Almost all of the Arnold relationship were members of the church.

*Baker, J. H.*

Bro. Baker was elected to the ministry in the Sunnyside congregation on March 30, 1895.

*Baker, Raphael*

Raphael Baker, son of Peter and Mark Baker, was born in Shenandoah County, Virginia, November 13, 1840, and died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Lillie C. Moore, Bismarck, West Virginia, December 13, 1932. He came to Keyser, then New Creek Station, about 1861 and with the exception of a short time spent in Ohio during the Civil War he had his home thereafter in West Virginia. On January 25, 1866, he married Lucinda Sisk, who preceded him in death on March 3, 1910. Four daughters were born to them. About 1859 he united with the Church of the Brethren and in 1885 was elected to the ministry and served in that office faithfully as long as his health would permit. He was blind for five years, having had an unsuccessful operation for cataract, but through it all he was cheerful. He would quote Scripture and repeat songs that he loved, always finding in them some comforting thought or precious promise which would cheer and compose his soul. He was buried in the family cemetery after his funeral had been conducted in the Locust Grove church by Elder B. W. Smith.

*Bane, William W.*

Elder William W. Bane, son of Abner and Martha Whipp Bane, was born November 19, 1885, and died May 22, 1943, at his home six miles south of Burlington, West Virginia. He was one of the many fine farmer ministers who have so well served the church. He had some training for the ministry at Potomac

State and Bridgewater College. On April 1, 1914, he was united in marriage to Etta High and to this union were born two sons, William, Jr., now serving in a Civilian Public Service camp at Beltsville, Maryland, and Robert, at home. Bro. Bane accepted Christ as his Savior in 1903 and was called to the ministry by the Beaver Run congregation in 1908, and later to the eldership. With deep humility, consecration, and honor he served his home congregation and the White Pine congregation as elder. He also has served the district for a number of years as director of the child rescue home, a member of the ministerial board, and a number of times as Standing Committeeman. He was a good farmer, a successful home builder, and an influential servant of God. Funeral services were conducted in the Beaver Run church by A. R. Showalter, assisted by E. T. Fike and A. S. A. Holsinger, and his body was laid to rest in the near-by cemetery.

*Barnes, Fleming C.*

Bro. Barnes was born in Fayette County, Pennsylvania, March 9, 1839. When about six years old he was brought to Preston County, West Virginia, and lived a few years with his aunt, and was then taken into the family of Samuel A. Boger, where he resided until of age.

He began teaching school at the age of twenty-one and taught eight successive terms, and then went to farming on a farm two miles from the Salem church in the Sandy Creek congregation. On April 20, 1862, he was married to Alcinda Guthrie, and the following year was elected to the ministry. They were much interested in the work of the church and did much for the church and for the poor and needy. To them were born five daughters and two sons, all faithful members of the church. Bro. Barnes died in 1927 at the age of eighty-eight years.

*Beeghly, Benjamin*

Benjamin Beeghly, whose father and mother came from Germany, was born on March 26, 1821. He was the first elder of the Eggon congregation. His residence was at Aurora, then West Union, and he lived there possibly by about 1855. His first marriage was to Leah Horner, his second to Polly Mosser.

*Biser, Jacob*

Jacob Biser was called to the ministry in the Beaver Run congregation.

*Biser, M. M.*

Bro. M. M. Biser is a minister of the Beaver Run congregation, but has likely never been very active.

*Biser, Solomon*

Bro. Solomon Biser lived in the Beaver Run congregation and did a good bit of preaching in the surrounding churches. He is a descendant of Sam Arnold through a daughter, Hannah, who married Jacob Biser.

*Bittinger, Desmond Wright*

Bro. Bittinger was born December 16, 1905, to Brother Jonas H. and Sister Etta Fike Bittinger near Eglon, West Virginia. He was licensed to preach in September 1922 and installed in September 1923 in the Maple Spring church. He was ordained to the eldership in Africa in the fall of 1930.

His educational record is as follows: elementary school, Eglon; high school, Aurora; Elizabethtown College, A. B. degree, 1927; University of Pennsylvania, A. M. degree, 1934, Ph. D. degree, 1940.

On June 15, 1927, he was married to Irene Frantz at Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania. To this union children were born as follows: Stanley, 1928; Patricia, 1930; Richard, 1937; Marianne, 1941.

He has served the church in the following capacities: student summer pastorates in New York state, Missouri, and Virginia; pastor, Lima, Ohio, 1927-29; missionary to Africa, 1930-39, and while there served two years as chairman of the mission, and treasurer of the mission for three years; professor of sociology and education, McPherson College, McPherson, Kansas, 1940-44; member of mission and ministerial board, Southwestern Kansas, 1941-44; member General Mission Board, Church of the Brethren, 1942-43; member Standing Committee, 1933 and 1939; editor of the *Gospel Messenger*, official publication of the Church of the Brethren, 1944-.

Thus he has served through many avenues and in many fields the church he loves and believes in, but most of his life has been lived outside his native state of West Virginia. But wherever he has served he has done his service well and found a great joy in it. He is now serving well in one of the most responsible and influential places in our church.

*Bittinger, Emmert Foster*

Emmert was born at Jordan Run, West Virginia, on Sept. 22, 1925, the first child of Foster and Esther Bair Bittinger. This occurred in the little log cabin where the parents lived during their first pastorate. He accepted Christ at Browntown, Virginia, along with his two younger sisters and all were baptized by their father July 30, 1933. He attended the public schools in Virginia and West Virginia, graduating from Bruce High in Westernport, Maryland, in 1943. Because of the accelerated school program for ministerial students in wartime, immediately upon graduation from high school he entered Potomac State College at Keyser and remained there until the summer of 1944, when he entered Bridgewater College.

From early childhood when asked what he wanted to do when he grew up, Emmert would answer, "Be what daddy is," or "Be a preacher." In 1943 the Westernport congregation called him to the ministry and he was licensed on March 21, 1943. On May 21, 1944, he was ordained to the full ministry. His plans are to finish college and Bethany Seminary, preparing himself for service in the church. He is a young man of deep consecration and promise.

*Bittinger, Foster M.*

Bro. Foster was born June 11, 1901, son of Jonas and Etta Fike Bittinger, at Accident, Maryland. Shortly after his birth the family moved to a farm near the Accident school in the Eggon congregation. There he attended public school and Sunday school, much of the time his mother being his Sunday-school teacher.

He taught school at the age of seventeen and later attended Elizabethtown Academy, where he graduated in 1922, and then finished his college work at Bridgewater in 1927.

On June 3, 1924, he was married to Esther Bair of Blackrock, Pennsylvania. To them the following children have been born: Emmert, 1925 (now a minister); Virginia, 1927; Annabelle, 1927; Mildred, 1929 (deceased, 1929); and Kathleen, 1932.

He has served in pastorates at Red Creek one summer; North Fork in West Virginia; Browntown, Virginia; Madison, Virginia; Terra Alta, West Virginia; and at present in the Westernport and Frostburg churches in Western Maryland. He also served

as field director in West Virginia, as a member of various district boards in a number of districts, as regional board representative, as representative to the West Virginia Council of Churches, and as Standing Committeeman, etc. He has served in various ways in the Camp Galilee program and administration, and has often been moderator of district meeting.

He believes that the Church of the Brethren is here for such a day as this and wants to see her program put into world-wide operation, beginning in our own hearts.

*Boger, John*

John, son of Christian Boger, a German immigrant, was born at Pine Hill, Pennsylvania, in 1774. In 1808 he came with his family to near Brandonville, West Virginia, where he served as justice of the peace and as a minister of the Church of the Brethren. He was the first minister known to be elected in the Sandy Creek congregation, having been elected about 1830-35. He and Jacob Thomas preached in the first church house built at Salem in 1845. He preached in German. He died in 1852 and is buried on the Boger farm near his birthplace.

During his latter years he studied prophecy and wrote a treatise on prophecy, which was the first printed volume emanating from Preston County.<sup>1</sup> This treatise came into the hands of Pastor Russell and formed the foundation of his calculations for the Millennial Dawn Church (Jehovah's Witnesses).<sup>2</sup>

*Bohrer, Anthony*

Bro. Bohrer was baptized in 1904 and at the fall council of that year was elected to the deaconship, and at the spring council of 1905 he was elected to the ministry by the unanimous vote of the church, Elder Peter Arnold presiding. He and Luther Shanholtz traveled much together preaching the gospel. Bro. B. W. Smith preached the first sermon in the Old Excelsior school where Bro. Bohrer now lives. He has served the church faithfully through his ministry, according to his talent, and his home was always open to men of God.

*Bowman, Oscar F.*

A native of Harrisonburg, Virginia, Oscar is the son of Elder S. I. Bowman. He received his B. A. degree from Bridgewater

<sup>1</sup> Morton, *History of Preston County*. Page 324.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas, Susie, *History of the Sandy Creek Congregation*. Page 30.

College and his B. D. from Bethany Biblical Seminary. He is an ordained elder and has served as pastor of churches in both Virginia and West Virginia. He has served on the district boards of the District of Northern Virginia and as elder of the Smith Creek congregation in Virginia. Mrs. Bowman is the former Mildred Thompson of Harrisonburg, Virginia, who is also a graduate of Bridgewater College. Their home is blessed with two children, Rebecca and Paul.

They came to West Virginia to serve the Tear Coat congregation in 1943 and their service has been appreciated and helpful, both in the local congregation and in the district.

#### *Bucklew, Solomon*

Elder Bucklew was born in Preston County, West Virginia, on August 25, 1840. He united with the church in 1860 and in the same year was elected to the deacon's office. In 1862 he was married to Elizabeth Strawser. In 1864 he was elected to the ministry, was soon advanced to the second degree, and about 1866 was ordained to the eldership.

The need was great and he pushed out far and near to labor for the salvation of souls. He was called upon for many series of meetings through West Virginia and Pennsylvania. He was a man of great stature, making a very dignified and awe-inspiring impression in the pulpit. His voice and manner were very commanding. Folks who have heard him at his best have told me with tears of his wonderful sermons.

In 1876 he moved from the Cheat River congregation to Sandy Creek. After that congregation was divided and the Markleysburg congregation was organized, he was given oversight of that congregation. In 1884 he moved to Markleysburg, and in 1887 to Canton, Illinois. From there, because of his wife's failing health, he moved to the home of his daughter in Iowa, where his wife died. Feeling lonely, he made a preaching trip through the East, visiting his homeland, and again settling in Markleysburg. There on February 6, 1914, he married his second wife, Sister Mary C. Sterner. In the spring of 1915 they moved to the Mt. Union (Morgantown) congregation, where he served as elder and pastor. There he died in 1926 after having preached for sixty-one years.

*Burgess, Albert*

Bro. Burgess has been serving for a number of years as a supply minister, going where needed and called. He is a high school teacher by profession and resides at Keyser, West Virginia. Both he and his wife are workers in the Keyser church when he is not out preaching elsewhere on Sunday. They have a family of two girls.

*Cassady, John Harry*

Elder J. H. Cassady was born on a farm in Grant County, West Virginia, on October 24, 1871. He began teaching school at the age of nineteen, and thereafter taught school in the winter and worked on the farm in the summertime. To further his education he attended Fairmont State Normal two terms. On January 25, 1896, he was married to Miss Meribah Idelman, of Maysville, West Virginia. On December 25, 1890, he united with the Church of the Brethren during a series of meetings conducted by Elder Silas Hoover of Pennsylvania. He was elected to the deaconship at the Brick church in 1897.

Teaching was his chosen profession and he continued teaching at Bayard until 1900, when he entered Juniata College to prepare himself better. Through financial difficulties he struggled to graduation. While at Juniata he was called to the ministry on March 23, 1903. This brought a problem. His preparation and planning had been for the teaching profession. After much prayer and thought he accepted, still with the intention of continuing his teaching. And after graduation he did continue teaching until he received a call to become pastor of the West Johnstown church. This presented still another problem, but, after much prayer, he and his good wife put it into the hands of the Lord, and were led to accept the call.

The Lord blessed his ministry. He took a leading part in the work of the districts of Western and Middle Pennsylvania, where he served. Sister Cassady, who was also born and reared in West Virginia, was a constant help and encouragement to him. Their work was mostly done outside the bounds of West Virginia, but we are glad to think of them as products of the church in West Virginia. They had a family of six children, viz., Maynard, Mildred, Helen, Robert, Paul, and John, Jr.

*Clark, Dennis*

Bro. Dennis Clark was elected to the ministry in the Greenland congregation in 1886 and advanced to the second degree in 1889, and to the eldership at some unknown later date. He had charge of the congregation from the resignation of Charles Frantz in 1903 until 1910 or 1911. He was recognized as an able speaker.

*Clark, Thomas, Sr. and Jr.*

There were two Thomas Clarks, both ministers, but from no records and no individuals can I find enough information to distinguish between them. In the notes of John Kline, this is found: "May 21, (1849) Thomas Clark and Michael Lyon are established," perhaps meaning ordained to the eldership or full ministry, as it is said that the same day William Michaels is elected speaker. That was done at Solomon Michaels', in the Greenland congregation as it now is. Those two brethren were given responsibilities, which may mean that they had nearly the oversight of the congregation.

Older residents of the Allegheny congregation said that Thomas Clark, Sr., was born in 1786, installed into the ministry about 1831, and died in 1869. They, and also Sister Anderson of the Fairview congregation, now deceased, said that the first preaching that was done in the Allegheny congregation was done by Thomas Clark in 1848. They said that Thomas Clark lived on the hill east of Bayard and owned most of the land on that side of the river. That would be correct, for Bro. Kline often spent the night there and then the next day went to the railroad at Oakland.

John Reel of Bismarck, now deceased, said that the older Thomas Clark lived at Greenland, and the younger one, a nephew, at Bayard. That seems to be right but just what of the above work was done by each, we cannot tell.

*Cosner, Daniel*

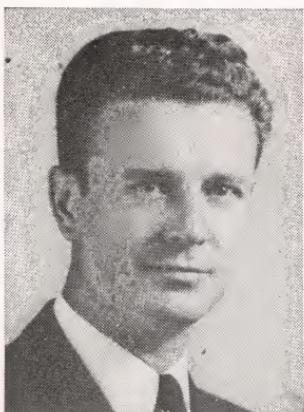
Bro. Daniel Cosner was called to the ministry in the Greenland congregation.

*Cosner, Earl*

Bro. Earl was elected to the ministry on September 21, 1913, and held his first revival at the Lone Star school; though he was much discouraged at first, there were seventeen conversions at



MOSES FIKE, JEREMIAH MILLER, AARON FIKE, JONAS FIKE  
Early leaders of the Eglon congregation. Taken 1908



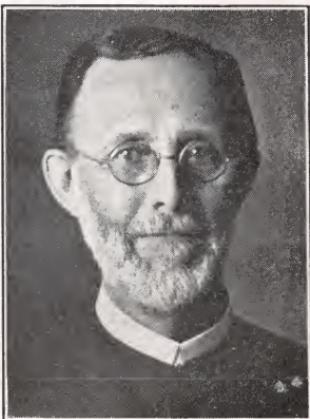
S. PAUL DAUGHERTY



ERNEST MUNTZING



R. K. SHOW ALTER



JEREMIAH THOMAS



AARON FIKE AND WIFE



LORENZO FIKE AND WIFE



DESMOND W. BITTINGER



D. W. TUSING



PHILIP DeMUTH



B. W. SMITH



M. L. RIGGLEMAN



RUSSELL G. WEST AND WIFE



CHARLES MARTIN



EZRA FIKE



B. B. LUDWICK AND WIFE



W. L. RIGGLEMAN AND FAMILY



NEWTON D. COSNER AND FAMILY



FOSTER M. BITTINGER AND WIFE



VERNON SHANHOLTZ



ROY K. MILLER



EDWARD K. ZIEGLER



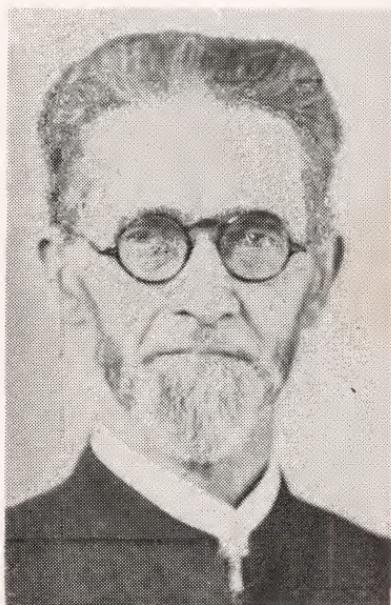
A. R. SHOWALTER



C. E. GRAPES AND WIFE



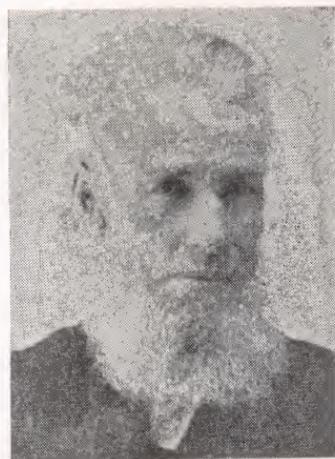
WILMA B. WAYBRIGHT



EMRA T. FIKE



M. R. WOLFE

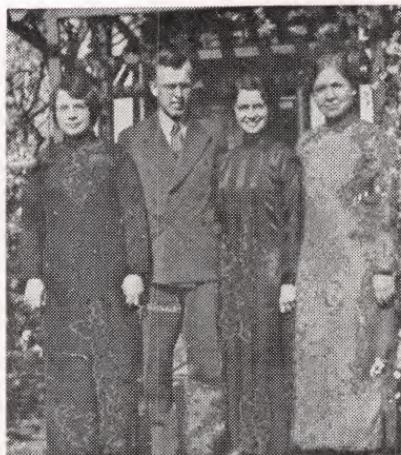


ASA HARMAN



BENJAMIN BEEGHLY AND WIFE

He was the first overseer of the Eglon congregation



VELMA OBER  
ALVA HARSH  
MARY HARSH  
MARY GAUNTZ CUMMING

Alva and Mary Harsh, missionaries to China, disappeared December 2, 1937.

that meeting. He served several terms as elder of the Allegheny congregation between 1925 and the present. Though his schooling has been meager, he is an able minister.

*Cosner, Henry*

Bro. Henry was elected to the ministry in the Allegheny congregation around 1926 and has served a large part of that time as elder of the congregation. He works in his garage in Petersburg, West Virginia, where he also resides, but gets up to Allegheny on Sunday for church.

*Cosner, John Tyler*

Bro. John T. was born near Bismarck, West Virginia, on January 15, 1840, and died on March 8, 1925, aged eighty-five years. His death occurred at the home of his son, Elder W. H. Cosner, where he had gone for a visit. He was the last of a family of sixteen children. His first marriage was to Eva Cosner in 1865; to them were born four sons and three daughters. She died April 21, 1898. His second marriage was to Pauline Geiser in 1901; she died in 1919.

He had been a member of the church for over sixty years, and an elder for forty years, during which time he traveled afoot and on horseback hundreds of miles over the rough mountain section of West Virginia, preaching the gospel. He was heard to say that in all of his labors, five dollars was all the recompense he ever received financially. His ordination must have been about 1887.

The fact that of his descendants all five children were members of the church, one of them an elder and one a deacon, and the many grandchildren are all substantial citizens, speaks well of his exemplary living and teaching. He was buried in the Cosner cemetery, near Bismarck, near where he lived. The funeral services were conducted by Elder B. W. Smith.

*Cosner, Martin*

Jacob Cosner, the father of the subject of this sketch, was a man of good business ability and rocklike character, who owned and operated a mill on Luney's Creek at the western end of Maysville Gap. He thus knew and served people from a large area. His wife, who was Barbary Hawk, is yet today remembered for her kind and generous spirit.

Martin, born in 1825, possessed the rocklike character and self-control of his father and the kindness of his mother, hence possessed the qualities of leadership. He served the Greenland congregation, earning the love and the respect of the membership. He traveled much, visiting and consulting with the membership. He baptized many applicants. His thought and practice were in advance of the time. He saw the importance of the young people, and received them into the church while young, which was not the practice then.

He was elder of the congregation at the time the Brick church was built and served until 1876 or 1877. In 1880 or 1881 he moved to northern Michigan, where he died a few years later. He was greatly missed. The congregation had depended on him and he had built it up. Those who followed worked valiantly but they too had been followers and they had not his qualities of leadership. The congregation and the church stand as a shrine to him and others who with him were builders.

#### *Cosner, Newton D.*

Near Bismarck, West Virginia, in the Allegheny congregation, Newton was born June 27, 1894. He was there elected to the ministry in 1916 and ordained to the eldership the following year. He taught school for two years and then went to Bridgewater College in 1916-17. In 1919 he entered Juniata College and continued there until graduation in 1925. During his college years he was summer pastor of the Rockwood, Middle Creek and Chess Creek congregations of Western Pennsylvania, and the Cumberland, Maryland, church for two summers.

His first full pastorate was the Markleysburg congregation in Western Pennsylvania. He has also served at Sipesville and Windber, Pennsylvania, and Westernport and Frostburg, Western Maryland. At present he is in the Akron, Ohio, church.

#### *Cosner, Zina*

Son of John Tyler Cosner, a minister widely known in West Virginia, and Maggie Rinker Cosner, Zina was born on December 29, 1895, at Bismarck, West Virginia. There his entire life has been spent excepting fifteen months during World War I. He united with the church at the age of sixteen and has taught a Sunday-school class every year since that, excepting during the war when he was away. He was elected to the ministry in

1921, and to the eldership in 1928. He has served his home church as elder during several one-year periods. He was married in 1919 and to them three children, two girls and a boy, have been born.

*Daugherty, S. Paul*

Bro. Daugherty was born at Augusta, West Virginia, on June 23, 1903, and was married to Helen Naomi Hatfield of Wenatchee, Washington, on August 9, 1925, at Bethany Seminary, Chicago, Illinois. He was licensed to the ministry by the Tear Coat church in March of 1923, installed by the First church in Chicago in 1926, and ordained to the eldership by the Tear Coat church in October 1932.

He served the Tear Coat church as pastor from 1930 to 1934, and the Union Chapel church in the Tear Coat congregation from 1931 to 1939. From 1939 to the present he has served the Live Oak church in California. He has also served as evangelist in West Virginia, at Tear Coat, Union Chapel, Bright's Hollow, Shady Grove, Hazelton, Clifton Mills, and Salem.

*DeMuth, Philip Edwin*

Philip E. was born April 14, 1918, in Keyser, West Virginia, to Philip and Clara DeMuth. He lived his entire youth in Keyser, and in 1937 graduated from the high school there. At twelve years of age he dedicated his life to Christ in a revival conducted by the Rev. B. M. Rollins. On April 13, 1930, he was received into the fellowship of the church of his parents, the Presbyterian Church, South, but finding the Church of the Brethren more to his liking he was baptized into the fellowship of the Church of the Brethren in Keyser on October 24, 1937. He became an active worker and on October 6, 1940, was licensed to preach; he was ordained to the full ministry on September 12, 1943. Following his conscience, and at the call of his country, he entered the Civilian Public Service camp at Lyndhurst, Virginia, on November 6, 1943. After serving eight months there he took on a new Civilian Public Service assignment, and is now working in a hospital for the mentally ill at Sykesville, Maryland.

*Dietrick, Abraham*

Bro. Dietrick was perhaps the first minister of the church to live in Hampshire County, in the vicinity of Augusta. He later moved to Ohio, taking his family in a one-horse wagon.

*Ebert, John*

Bro. John Ebert was called to the ministry in the Greenland congregation.

*Ebert, Otis*

Bro. Otis Ebert was called to the ministry in the Greenland congregation.

*Evans, Lester S.*

At the council meeting at the Brick church, September 6, 1924, Lester Evans and Ernest Muntzing were called to the ministry. Lester was not present, and for years he struggled with the decision as to whether or not it was the call of God. However, the minute of August 13, 1927, says, "As Bro. Lester Evans has decided to accept the call to the ministry, the church has gladly granted him a license to preach." He was installed on September 15, 1928.

Lester was born April 28, 1903, at Streby, West Virginia, to James G. and Arnie Becker Evans. At the age of seventeen he joined the church under the preaching of John Cassady. He was married on April 19, 1933, to Edna Mae Ebert, daughter of Jesse Ebert, at Keyser.

He has ever been ready to serve the church whenever she called him. His living is secured by other means, at present as supervising assistant for the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York. But his devotion to the church is growing and his life is increasingly of real service to her. He preaches, when called upon, but never takes pay for it. He graduated from Bridgewater College in 1933.

*Fike, Aaron*

Elder Aaron Fike, son of Peter and Magdalena Arnold Fike, was born in Fayette County, Pennsylvania, on Indian Creek, where he spent his early days. At the age of eleven he, with his parents, moved to Brownings Mill, Maryland, and in 1854 located near Eglon, West Virginia.

On March 29, 1860, he was married to Rebecca S. Rudolph. He served one year with his father, using noon and evening hours to make furniture which he would sell to earn money for his own household goods. In 1860 he united with the church and one year later was elected to the ministry; he was ordained to the eldership four years later.

From this time on his life was very strenuous. He spent much time away from home on preaching tours, often three or four weeks in length, without remuneration, and then returning worked the harder to maintain the family. Much of his early travel was on horseback. Twice he came home frozen to the saddle and his family had to carry him and the saddle into the house to thaw him loose, or to thaw out his hands and feet. He was known to preach fifteen miles from home, baptize applicants and then ride home with no change of clothes. He was often in danger fording swollen streams. Once his horse refused to ford the Cheat River as usual. Later he returned to find that the river had cut a deep channel at that place.

In his youth he was in vigorous health, but in later years his health failed. An affliction disabled him from riding, so he would walk. Often he would walk twenty miles, preach Saturday night and Sunday morning, and then walk home. He would walk forty miles to hold a meeting. He was indeed faithful.

He reared a family of eleven children. Three of the sons are elders in the church: Phineas, Emra, and Lorenzo. A. R. is a deacon. He used home remedies for the family, paying out only \$5.00 for doctor bills. He was born April 25, 1840, and died December 17, 1916, the funeral being conducted by Elder Jonas Fike; interment was in the Maple Spring cemetery.

#### *Fike, Albert J.*

Albert is a West Virginia boy, though most of his life has been spent outside the state. He was born at Eglon on December 4, 1890. The family moved to Grantsville, Maryland, in 1897, and from there to the Eastern Shore in 1907. He was elected deacon in 1915, married in 1916, called to the ministry in 1920, and ordained to the eldership in 1930. They have three boys: Norman, age twenty-seven; Paul, age twenty-five, a minister, elected in 1939; and Emerson, age sixteen. His service has for the most part been in the Peach Blossom and Ridgely churches.

#### *Fike, Earl William*

Bro. Earl, son of Ezra, was born at Eglon, West Virginia. He attended Bridgewater College, and served the Greenland and Petersburg congregations, and also the Ninth Street Church in Roanoke, Virginia.

*Fike, Emra Trenton*

Bro. Emra Fike, son of Aaron and Rebecca Rudolph Fike, was born near Eglon, West Virginia, on September 26, 1872. He married Rebecca Jane Umbel on March 31, 1895, in the Markleysburg church, Bro. Samuel C. Umbel officiating. To this union were born: Bertha A., Lottie R., Emmert S., Elsie D., Loretta V., and Olonzo P. The third, the fourth, and the fifth child died in infancy. The last one now serves in the ministry.

His second marriage was to Ruey Pearl Guthrie Frazee, on May 26, 1940.

He was baptized by Elder Z. Annon on February 15, 1885, near the Maple Spring church, elected to the ministry November 30, 1895, forwarded to the second degree June 6, 1896, and ordained to the eldership December 2, 1905, by Elders D. B. Arnold and T. B. Digman.

He has had charge of the following congregations: Red Creek, 1907-12; Cheat River, 1910-13; Greenland, 1912-18; Oak Grove, 1922-28; Pine Grove, 1918-28; Eglon, 1927-33. He has also served the church of the district in many other ways, among which are the following: member of the general welfare board, 1926-28; secretary of the Maple Grove Child Rescue Home for seventeen years; member of the district ministerial board since 1917. He has held one hundred ninety-two evangelistic meetings, receiving over one thousand members into the church, officiated in one hundred forty anointings, conducted two hundred thirty funerals, solemnized fifty-two marriages, assisted in licensing and installing eighty ministers and ordaining twenty-four elders, and has represented the district nine times on Standing Committee.

*Fike, Ezra*

Ezra Fike was born February 17, 1884, and united with the church in 1894. He served as Sunday-school superintendent from June 1902—June 1906. He was elected to the ministry in December 1905, but because of ill-health was not installed until March 1906. He was advanced to the second degree in December 1906 and ordained to the eldership December 29, 1912. He was elected district treasurer in October 1912 and still serves in that capacity. In June 1905 he was elected a member of the district mission board and still serves in that office. His interest in missions, both home and foreign, has always been great. His prayer



### *Fike, Jonas*

Inadvertently this biography was omitted from the original manuscript until too late to have it included in the regularly printed text. Because of the outstanding contribution of Bro. Jonas Fike to the district it is now placed here near its proper alphabetical place.

Elder Jonas Fike, son of Elder S. A. and Rachel Snyder Fike, was born October 15, 1851, and departed this life June 24, 1925. At the age of sixteen he united with the Church of the Brethren, to which he diligently gave his thought, time, and talent in the promotion of the Lord's work, at first serving as deacon, then as minister, and later as elder.

He was one of the pioneer preachers of West Virginia, traveling hundreds of miles on horseback in his earlier years helping to establish and organize a number of congregations. Some of these chose him as their elder, so that for a number of years he was presiding elder over as many as six churches. In his later life he resigned his official duties in connection with all of them except his home congregation (Eglon) and the Harman congregation. He was the presiding elder at Harman until a little over a year before his death, thus completing thirty-seven years of service for that church.

His record of ministry shows 126 marriages, 363 funerals, and 440 baptisms. He loved the Gospel Messenger and the Gospel Visitor and never missed an issue of either. He had decidedly optimistic views regarding the church and the world in general. He gave much of his energy in the prohibition fight and in later years worked for the time when wars would be outlawed and universal peace would prevail.

He was a leader in his district, yet never attended Annual Conference unless sent; instead he made it a rule of life that when others were enjoying the great Conference he would go to some neglected place among the mountains and preach the gospel to some who otherwise would not hear it.

He was united in marriage to Caroline Henze in 1871 and to this union were born three sons and six daughters. After her death he married Melissa D. Hamstead in 1882 and to this union were born two sons and two daughters. He preceded his companion in death. Funeral services were conducted from the Eglon church by Elder Jeremiah Thomas assisted by Elder George S. Arnold. Some estimated the crowd attending the funeral to be the largest ever gathered at Maple Spring. It was an indication of the love and esteem in which he was held.

had long been that missionaries might go out from the home congregation to foreign lands. He lived to see that prayer answered a number of times. He served the district on Standing Committee several times. He was always interested in the young and served as a promoter, and for some years as trustee, of Camp Galilee. For a number of years he served as president of the district council of boards. He is of the third generation of faithful servants of the church, his grandfather, Sam Fike, and his father, Jonas, both having been faithful pioneer traveling preachers in the district.

*Fike, Galen K.*

Galen was born to Elder Ezra and Virgie Hamstead Fike on January 1, 1918, being of the fourth generation of a line of ministers who have faithfully served the church in West Virginia. He was licensed to preach November 30, 1935, installed June 17, 1937, and ordained September 10, 1943. He graduated from Bridgewater College in 1939 and served that summer at Crab Orchard, West Virginia. Since that time he has helped in the store at home, and has done some evangelistic work; he has been serving in the Eglon congregation, in the Seneca congregation, and in various other places. He has been much interested in young people's work and has exerted a leadership there, having also promoted and worked in the camps at Galilee. He is a promising young minister with most of his ministry still before him. On August 20, 1944, he was married to Lorraine Texier of Harrisonburg, Virginia.

*Fike, John S.*

Bro. John S., son of Samuel A. Fike, was born September 24, 1859, at Eglon, West Virginia; baptized in 1878; married to Flora Strawser on November 6, 1884; elected to the deaconship in 1891; elected to the ministry in 1893; advanced to the second degree in 1894; and ordained to the eldership March 15, 1921. During his ministry he married one hundred twenty-four couples, baptized one hundred sixty-seven persons, conducted seventy-five funerals, and held seventy-five revivals. He does not know how long, but thinks it probable that he has served on the district mission board for fifty or sixty years. (Deceased December 1944.)

He is not a strong pulpit orator but has a pleasing personality and is much loved through the mountains of West Virginia.

People like to have him in their homes, and young ministers like to have him as adviser. He trusts them and gives them responsibilities. He loves the church and has the work of the mission field at heart. To many he is known as "Uncle John."

*Fike, Lorenzo H.*

Lorenzo Fike was born May 20, 1875, one mile east of Eglon to Aaron and Rebecca Rudolph Fike. He united with the church in 1887 at a meeting conducted by Samuel A. Sisler and George Bucklew at the Maple Spring church, and was baptized by his father. While in the teens he served a number of years as Sunday-school superintendent and read the first Sunday-school report ever read in the Maple Spring church, in order to show the need for regular attendance. He was married to Laura T. Myers on March 27, 1898. He was elected to the deacon's office December 5, 1895, elected to the ministry December 2, 1905, advanced to the second degree in 1906, and ordained to the eldership December 29, 1912, by Elder S. N. McCann. He faithfully served many small and distant churches. While preaching at the Rehobeth and Mt. Pisgah churches in the Allegheny congregation he drove a distance of twenty-five miles each way. He also preached in the Red Creek congregation and in the Canaan Valley church, where he baptized a man one Sunday and drove home, a distance of twenty-five miles, by horse and buggy, without a change of clothing. He also preached in the Cheat River congregation, and one time arose on Sunday morning at one o'clock and walked a distance of twenty-three miles, preached at 10:30 A. M. and also at night, after which he was brought to Terra Alta in a car and then walked home, a distance of fifteen miles, arriving home at three the next morning. He has served his turn faithfully in his home congregation and managed his farm near the Glade View church.

*Fike, Moses*

Elder Moses Fike was born July 15, 1837, and died at the ripe age of ninety-six years, ten months and twenty-five days. He was a son of Peter Fike, who first settled at Somerset, Pennsylvania, later moving to New Germany, Maryland, where Moses was likely born, then to Indian Creek, Pennsylvania, in 1838 and to Sang Run, Maryland, in 1850 because of a depression forcing them to sell. Cows then brought five to eight dollars per head and sheep seventy-five cents. At Sang Run Moses joined the

Church of the Brethren at the age of fifteen, which was considered very young. His father learned to read and write both German and English.

In 1854 the family moved near to what is now Eglon, West Virginia, where they became the nucleus around which the Maple Spring church was built. Three of the sons, Samuel, Aaron, and Moses, became ministers, as did also a son-in-law. In this home was held the first council and the first election of a deacon and a minister in 1856. From this family have come fifty-five ministers of the Church of the Brethren up to 1934. When Moses was asked why this family was so religiously inclined he replied that his father never stopped work in the field unless he told them a Bible story, and that he was a great Bible reader, at evening time reading aloud to his family, in musical German, so that even the whip-poor-wills came up close to hear.

Moses purchased a part of his father's farm and spent most of the rest of his life there. He was elected to the deaconship at the age of twenty-eight and in 1874 to the ministry; two years later he was advanced to the second degree, and served sixty years in the ministry. He kept few records, but in an entry in an old Bible the following was found: "In the year 1874 the brethren told me to preach and these are the miles that I traveled. In the year 1876 they put me in the second degree. These are the miles I traveled the first two years I preached." The page is partly torn and the figures are partly lost, but it must have been from twelve hundred to fifteen hundred miles per year.

On March 26, 1860, he married Sophia Rudolph, who died in 1903. To this union were born five sons and eight daughters. On April 19, 1905, he married Rebecca Beegly, who died in 1927. On October 15, 1928, he married Betty Digman, widow of Elder Thomas Digman. He died in June 1934 and the funeral was conducted by Brethren Dan Spaid and John S. Fike from the Maple Spring church. From the age of ninety to ninety-five he preached nearly one hundred times, but at ninety-five he lost his voice for preaching, though he could still talk. At the age of ninety he would walk to Brookside, preach, and walk home, a round trip of eight miles before dinner.

He was a good man. His children say that he never whipped them, but he was firm and just, so that they respected and

obeyed his word. He never scolded. Always before breakfast he would read from the Bible and then all would kneel in prayer. As many revivals were then held in wintertime, he would be gone many weeks in winter and the family would carry on the work while he was gone. His travel was mostly done afoot, often a trip of seventy or ninety miles into "the wilderness," as he called it, where no one else cared to go. He always took his family to church and the weather was never too bad. He had great oratorical powers.

*Fike, Olonzo Paul*

Olonzo, son of Emra and Rebecca Umbel Fike, was born near Eglon, West Virginia, on September 13, 1916, the youngest child and only living son of his parents. He accepted Christ and was baptized at the Maple Spring church on September 12, 1924; was licensed to preach at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, on May 9, 1934; was installed into the ministry May 20, 1935, at Harrisburg; and was ordained to the eldership September 10, 1943, in the Maple Spring church.

The first five years of his ministry were given to the Eglon congregation. For two and one-half years he served as pastor of the Terra Alta co-operative Brethren church. In the summer of 1944 he accepted the pastorate of the Bear Creek church in Western Maryland. He served one summer (1938) as summer pastor in the Knobley church in West Virginia, and he has done evangelistic work in the home district.

On June 15, 1938, he was united in marriage to Ardith Wotring, and they are the parents of two children, twins, born May 9, 1939, John Paul and Evangeline Joy Fike.

In addition to his ministerial duties Olonzo holds a full-time position as sanitarian with the Maryland State Board of Health. Since 1941 the family has resided at Mt. Lake Park, Maryland.

*Fike, Samuel A.*

Five generations before Samuel, the Fike family came from Hanover, Germany. His grandfather joined the Church of the Brethren. His father, Peter, gave his entire life to the church. After Peter's marriage to Magdalena Arnold of Burlington, daughter of Samuel Arnold, God blessed their home with four sons and six daughters; three of the sons were ministers and the fourth was a deacon in the church. The ministers were Samuel, Moses, and Aaron.

Samuel was the oldest son and grew to manhood on the farm. When twenty-three years old he was married to Rachael Snyder. The following October he united with the Church of the Brethren and soon afterwards, in 1854, moved to the Eglon vicinity near his father, becoming with his father and his brothers pioneer settlers of the church in those parts.

He was born December 22, 1820, made a deacon in 1854, elected to the ministry in 1856 at an election held by Elder John Kline, and in 1861 he was ordained and placed in charge of the German Settlement (Eglon) congregation, over which he retained the eldership until his death on May 7, 1905—forty-four years of faithful service. He preached two hundred sixty-three funerals, baptized two hundred seven applicants, served twice on Standing Committee, assisted in the organization of many congregations, and rode many miles through the mountains of West Virginia on his horse, Bill, to preach the Word of the Lord.

His fatherly disposition enabled him to be a good elder and he had charge of a number of congregations. People loved him and looked for his coming. He had a strong physique and tired little from his long journeys. His delivery was vigorous and demonstrative. He would take off his coat when preaching and lay it on the table before him. Once when bringing his fist down upon the table as he was reaching a climax, he hit his watch and smashed it to pieces. His brethren called him the "Son of Thunder," because of his fearlessness and earnestness.

By his first wife he had twelve children. Jonas, Tobias, and John were ministers, while Levi and Peter were deacons. His manner of life was simple. He was absorbed in another kingdom. His temper was so even that his children say they never saw him angry. He was a great servant of the Lord and even now, forty years after his death, his name is almost legendary in West Virginia. His funeral was from the Maple Spring church, conducted by Elder G. S. Arnold.

#### *Fike, Samuel K.*

Bro. S. K. Fike was another of the West Virginia ministers who served a great deal outside of the state. He was born in Preston County, West Virginia, near Eglon on March 8, 1864. On October 16, 1884, he was married to Emma S. Hendrickson. He was elected to the ministry in the Maple Spring church, moved to Garrett County, Maryland, and served the Maple

Grove church as elder and pastor for nine years. The family moved to the Eastern Shore of Maryland in 1906; he served the Peach Blossom church as elder until his death on July 15, 1918. He also served some of the adjoining churches and was very active in evangelistic work. Apart from church work he was a blacksmith and a farmer. To them were born five children.

*Fike, Tobias*

Tobias was born near Eglon in 1856, son of Samuel A. Fike. He was elected to the ministry in 1888, advanced to the second degree in 1889, and ordained to the eldership in 1891. Many of his years of ministry were given in the vicinity of his later home near Thurmont, Maryland. There he died in 1938.

*Finnell, Virgil C.*

Bro. Finnell was baptized at Buffington, West Virginia, in the Monongahela River by Elder William Murphy on May 14, 1893; elected to the ministry in the Mt. Union (Morgantown) congregation, on September 14, 1901. He is well known and has served the church well outside the district and very well in the field of education through his work in the No-Tobacco League. This sketch is merely to recognize him as a West Virginia boy who has made good.

*Flannagan, Robert*

Bro. Flannagan was elected to the ministry in 1903 in the Red Creek congregation, at the Bethel church. In 1910 he was advanced to the second degree. He never did much preaching but loved and served the church as best he could. There are some who believe that his father or his grandfather was also a minister.

*Frantz; Charley*

Bro. Frantz spent the early years of his ministry in the Greenland and Knobley congregations. He was ordained in 1886, and he and William George served jointly as elders of the Greenland congregation for some time, or until about 1894. Then Bro. Frantz served alone until 1903, when he resigned to move west.

*George, T. Ezra*

Bro. Ezra George is a native of West Virginia, a man of large ability, who has served outside the district. At present he serves the pastorate at Goshen, Indiana.

*George, William*

Bro. William George was born January 16, 1817, and died May 27, 1899. He married Lydia Ann Michaels, sister of Elder William Michaels of the Greenland congregation. To this union were born eleven children. The sixth child, Rachael, married Dan Ludwig, whose son Berzy is a minister. Betty married Taylor Martin, and their son Charles was a minister. Many others of the family of children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren were great church workers. William was a very faithful worker in the church and to him belongs largely the credit for the Knobley congregation and her progress for nearly fifty years.

William, before conversion, was a dance leader. One night upon returning home from a dance, he saw standing in the chimney corner a man dressed in white. This man talked to William, and never again did William go to a dance. Soon afterwards he was converted and used his musical talent to teach music in the church. He was a very muscular and strong man, and when he hired someone to work for him, he told him that he was not expected to keep up with him. Yet he was very tender-hearted, and though a successful lover of fishing, he always killed all live bait before fishing, knowing it had feeling and a sense of pain.

He was very friendly, though the children say that they never saw him laugh aloud, nor did they see him angry. He died of facial cancer.

*Grapes, Charles E.*

To George W. and Mary Jane Saville Grapes of Hampshire County this son, Charles, was born September 22, 1891. This lineage of Brethren heritage reaches back through Grandfather Isaac and Grandfather Jonathan Grapes, in whose barn the first Brethren meetings were held in what is now the Tear Coat congregation.

Charles was baptized in Tear Coat in 1905, elected to the ministry in 1910, advanced to the second degree in 1915, ordained to the eldership in 1919.

He served the Tear Coat congregation until 1924, the Bean Settlement congregation from 1916 to 1924. In 1924 he left West Virginia. While in West Virginia he served in the mission field from 1914 to 1924, and also served on the mission board.

He was united in marriage to Ada F. Bucklew, daughter of Silas Bucklew of Hampshire County. They moved to Southern Pennsylvania in 1924. He has served as pastor at Lost Creek and Chambersburg. At present they are at Greencastle.

*Guthrie, Joseph*

Joseph, son of William and Mariah Guthrie, one of a family of twelve children, was born in 1846 near Hazelton, West Virginia. There he lived as a farmer and minister until his death in 1912. Early in life he became a member of the Church of the Brethren. He served as a deacon for many years; in 1880 he was elected to the ministry and was later elected to the eldership of the Sandy Creek congregation.

In 1870 he was married to Hannah Kelly and to this union were born six children: Charles Allen, who was twice married, first to Emma Spiker, and second to Flossie Speorlien; Martha Ellen, who married Rev. George W. Van Sickle; Samuel Floyd, who married Rosa Barnes; Mary, who married Oren Van Sickle; Sarah, who married David Van Sickle; and Frank, who married Millie Knox.

Bro. Guthrie served well his church in his time.

*Hamstead, Obed*

Bro. Hamstead was elected to the office of deacon in 1892, elected to the ministry in 1893, advanced to the second degree in 1894, and ordained to the eldership in December 1897. This was in the Maple Spring congregation, where he spent most of his life and ministry. He has served as elder of the Seneca and Greenland congregations, and of the Shiloh congregation in the Second District. In 1927, feeling the call to devote more time to the ministry, he and his family left the farm at Eglon and accepted the call to the pastorate of the Morgantown church, where he served for ten years, and where he still resides.

*Harsh, Alva C.*

Bro. Alva Harsh was born September 29, 1910, near Eglon, West Virginia, to Jesse and Effie Fike Harsh. He attended grade school at Eglon, high school at Aurora, college at Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, and seminary at Bethany in Chicago. He was baptized August 13, 1921, licensed to preach May 26, 1928, and installed May 31, 1931. On June 6, 1934, he was married to Mary Hykes, who was to him a loving and helpful companion.

They served as pastors at Petersburg and Greenland from June 1934 to July 1936, at which time they answered the call of their church to serve in China. They served there until December 2, 1937, when they disappeared from the mission station at Show Yang. The town was under the military control of the Japanese and had been for about a month. That evening a young girl came to the missionaries with an urgent request for them to come to her home. Alva and Mary and Minneva Neher secured permission from the authorities and responded to the call. From this call of duty they never returned. Dr. Y. T. Hsing, a Chinese co-worker, says of them: "Their last act of kindness, so far as we know, was to go out at night to help others, and they never returned. We are sure that their work on earth is done, and that they have safely arrived at their heavenly home." Bro. C. D. Bonsack, former secretary of the General Mission Board, asks, "Shall we let them die in vain, or shall we here and now dedicate our lives to that higher call to help the need of a world that suffers for love, guidance and God?" A memorial service was held in the Maple Spring church for them on August 7, 1938. The September 26, 1938, issue of the *Gospel Messenger* was dedicated and devoted to them.

#### *Harsh, Norman*

Bro. Norman was born June 27, 1926, near Eglon, West Virginia, to Jesse and Effie Fike Harsh. He was licensed to the ministry on August 9, 1942, at the Maple Spring church and ordained in September 1943. Since his licensing he has been preaching in the local and near-by churches. At present he is taking his college work on the accelerated basis at Manchester College, Indiana. He loves rural life and aspires to serve the rural church and community.

#### *Harman, Asa*

Bro. Asa, son of Solomon and Elizabeth Harman, was born October 31, 1834, in the Harman Hills of Pendleton County. In 1856 he married Elizabeth, daughter of Jonas and Mary Rohrbaugh Cooper. She died and in 1863 he married her sister, Barbara Cooper. Their children were Clay, Job, Mary, Daniel, Martin, Jason, Simon, and Asa. His home was in Randolph County near the present town named for him, Harman, West Virginia. At one time he owned two thousand acres of land and divided it among his children. In his later years he met with financial

reverses which interfered with the education of some of his children who were attending the university. This came through sacrificing his home work for the ministry.

He was reared in a United Brethren home, but after moving to Harman he became interested in the Church of the Brethren. A sermon by S. A. Fike on the text, "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only," opened a good many things to him. After the service he entered into a lengthy argument with Bro. Fike, and some who heard it remarked, "It won't be long now until he is in the church." Others who heard it said, "By the way he argues, it doesn't seem he will ever be in." But he was trying to get light and soon he was in the church, and within a few years had become one of the leading ministers in the state, so his contemporaries said.

In John Kline's notes we find: "Sept. 3, 1859, Asa Harman is elected speaker." At that time the Harman field included all of the present congregation, and Red Creek, Seneca, and Circleville, now a part of Second Virginia. He traveled extensively over that field, and elsewhere. He died in 1902, leaving a congregation and a family to carry on the work of the church.

#### *Harman, Ellsworth*

Bro. Ellsworth is of the third generation of ministers in the Harman family, his father and his grandfather, Asa, having been ministers. He is the oldest child of Simon and Nettie Snyder Harman. Graduating from Bridgewater College he came home to work at home and in the home church during the summer, sometimes teaching away from home during the winter. At present he teaches near home, and takes his turn in the home pulpit on Sunday.

#### *Harman, Simon P.*

Bro. Simon, the third child of Rev. Asa Harman, was born on Horse Camp Run, near the present site of Harman, West Virginia. He married Nettie Snyder, daughter of Capt. Sampson Snyder, and is at present a prominent farmer and stock raiser. His children are Ellsworth (a minister), Iva, Carrie, Snyder, Harry, and Twila. He never exercised in the ministry very much, feeling that his work was farming, and that the minister should be one who could give more time to, and be paid for, his services. He learned from his father's experience that one

cannot be an extensive farmer and give much time to the ministry. He and his family are faithful, energetic workers in the church.

*Hesse, Clarence G.*

Bro. Hesse was born in Grant County, West Virginia, on September 6, 1887, the son of Charles and Catherine Hamstead Hesse. He was married to Myrtle Idleman of his home congregation on August 11, 1920. He united with the church at Greenland in January 1905, was elected deacon in September 1907, and minister in September 1909.

His school record is: Bridgewater College, A. B., 1917; Crozer Seminary, B. D., 1919; University of Pennsylvania, M. A., 1920. He has served the church as pastor at Bethany in Philadelphia, Norristown, Pennsylvania, Somerset, Pennsylvania, and at Bridgewater, Virginia. He served as president of the National Pastors' Association for a number of years. His ministry has been outside the state of West Virginia.

*Hockman, India*

Bro. India has resided at Romney, Franklin, and elsewhere, but his home and his home church were in his thinking the White Pine church and community. He now serves that church as pastor and elder.

*Hockman, P. Stein*

Bro. Hockman, son of John W. and Savilla Alice Hockman, was born at Hoy, West Virginia, on July 28, 1892. He united with the church in 1904 and in 1917 was married to Grace E. McGee of Rada. To this union eleven children have been born, eight of whom are already members of the church, as are also the three sons-in-law; one son is in C.P.S. work in the mental hospital at Sykesville, Maryland.

Licensed to preach in 1928, ordained in 1929, and advanced to the eldership in 1930, he has served in the free ministry in the White Pine and Tear Coat congregations. He is affiliated with the Clean Life League of America and in 1930 and for four years thereafter served as state superintendent. Since then he has been more or less active as a lecturer in that field.

*Holsinger, Amos S. A.*

Amos Holsinger was born November 21, 1888, and was in-

stalled into the ministry March 28, 1918. He served as summer pastor at the White Hall church in 1919 and at the Sand Ridge church, Ohio, in 1921, as student pastor at Nashville, Tennessee, 1922-23. He was ordained to the eldership in 1928 and has served as presiding elder in the Beaver Run congregation much of the time since then. On August 1, 1923, he married Bessie Wright Arnold, daughter of Elder George S. Arnold, and they have since then made their home on the old Arnold homestead. He has been active in the ministry in the home congregation, and also in the service of the district, serving as clerk of the elders' body since 1939 and on Standing Committee in 1944.

*Huffman, Jacob S.*

From a long line of faithful Brethren horseback preachers, who often crossed from the Valley of Virginia to the mountains and valleys of West Virginia, Zigler as well as Huffman fore-bearers, Jacob was born on December 27, 1911, to John D. and Annie Zigler Huffman, near New Market, Virginia.

Jacob united with the church at the age of eleven and at the age of eighteen was licensed to preach in the Unity congregation in Virginia. He graduated from Bridgewater College in 1933 and then taught school near his home for three years, taking his turn preaching in his home church.

In September 1935 he was married to Olive Fike, daughter of Ezra Fike of Eglon. He then taught school two years in Preston County, West Virginia, and followed that with two years in the medical school at Morgantown. During those years he often preached in the Maple Spring and Morgantown churches. He finished his medical degree at Richmond and his internship at Roanoke, Virginia, during which time he used a large percentage of his Sundays doing religious work.

Both he and his wife, being eager to serve some needy community in the practice of medicine and some needy church in a helpful way, were glad to find such a place in the mountains of West Virginia, at Harman, where they have a busy medical practice and have been serving in the Harman congregation since July 1, 1943. They have two children, Eleanor Ann and Harold Ezra.

*Idleman, Russell T.*

Bro. Idleman came to the end of his life in the Memorial hos-

pital in Harrisonburg, Virginia, following an operation. Born in Grant County, West Virginia, on April 26, 1871, he was the son of Simon P. and Sarah Lyon Idleman, deceased, and brother of Mrs. J. H. Cassady, Mrs. C. G. Hesse, Mrs. Willye A. Poling, Misses Ollie and Loretta Idleman.

As a lad he was of a thoughtful mind, and observing others falling into bad habits, resolved that he would keep himself free from those things, which he did. He united with the church at the age of seventeen and lived faithfully. Prayer was to him vital breath and native air.

He entered Juniata College in 1894 and thereafter for fifteen years taught school in Grant County. In 1900 he was called to the ministry by his home church, and was later ordained. On August 29, 1909, he married Amanda Weaver of Somerset County, Pennsylvania, and immediately they went to the Ten Mile church in the Western District of Pennsylvania, where he faithfully served the rest of his life, loving the small and needy places of the church. Four children were born to them: Ruth, Sara, Mabel, and a boy who died in infancy. His last sermons were preached in his old home church on August 8, 1938.

*Johnson, Albert*

Bro. Albert Johnson was called to the ministry in the Greenland congregation.

*Johnson, Otis W.*

Bro. Johnson was elected to the ministry in the Sunnyside congregation on April 22, 1922, and served in that congregation until the Keyser congregation was formed. Since then he has lived in the latter congregation, kept a butcher shop, worked in the Sunday school, and served in the ministry in the outlying places where needed.

*Johnson, Ross*

Ross was born in Preston County, near Eglon, August 5, 1897, and was elected to the ministry in the Greenland congregation about 1923 or 1924. He attended normal school at Eglon and Potomac State College and has taught about twenty years. At present he lives on his farm near Laurel Dale, and takes care of the preaching at the Oak Dale and Brick churches.

*Jones, Ollie P.*

At Eglon, West Virginia, on March 4, 1894, to Charles and

Tobitha Fike Jones, Ollie was born. He took life's challenge seriously and worked hard to prepare himself for greater service to the church and the community.

He began teaching school in 1911, attended Mt. Morris Academy in 1917-18, served as a conscientious objector during World War I, doing dairy farm work near Richmond, Virginia, in 1918. He was installed into the ministry in 1919, entered Blue Ridge College in September 1919, did home mission work during the summer of 1920 in Monroe County, West Virginia, and the same kind of work in Preston County in the summer of 1921.

He married Edna Dotter on September 5, 1922. He taught school in 1922-23, completed his college work at Blue Ridge in June 1925, and taught high school in West Virginia five years. Since 1930 he has served as principal of the schools in Kitzmiller, Maryland.

Perhaps his greatest contribution has been through his serving as manager of Camp Galilee at Terra Alta. During his period of service there he has paid off a large indebtedness and established the camp on a sound basis. He has given himself unreservedly to serving the good of the camp and her great purpose. He is most careful for the comfort of the campers, and eager that the spirit of the "Galilean Accent" be maintained.

#### *Kelly, Nelson*

Bro. Kelly lived in the Russeldale community of the White Pine congregation. He gave the land for and built the church now called Kelly Chapel. There he lived and preached and served as elder.

He was born August 5, 1848, and died July 20, 1920. He was a prosperous farmer and stock raiser, with a family of two sons and seven girls. He was married twice. He was buried in the Kelly graveyard on the farm owned by his father, Henry Kelly. The funeral was conducted by Elder B. W. Smith.

#### *Keplinger, Edgar*

Born near Maysville, West Virginia, he married Nellie Barger, daughter of Frank Barger of Jordan Run. They have lived since their marriage with the Barger family. Bro. Keplinger came into the Church of the Brethren from the United Brethren Church. Soon afterwards he was called to the ministry and he has served

his congregation in that office according to his talent. He has loved the church and believed strongly in her doctrine.

*Leatherman, Ernest*

Bro. Ernest was elected to the ministry in the Knobley congregation August 19, 1916, and after serving a time in his home congregation, moved to Mt. Airy, Maryland, where he died.

*Leatherman, George W.*

Elder G. W. Leatherman was born July 2, 1835, the son of John Leatherman and wife, near Burlington, West Virginia. He was baptized in November 1867 by Solomon Biser. His first marriage was in 1856 to Mary Whip, and his second marriage was to Caroline Thrush. He was elected to the ministry about 1884, and was ordained not long afterwards. He died October 8, 1905, at the age of seventy.

About the year 1885 he moved into the New Creek Valley and settled on a farm about four miles above Keyser. He took the lead in building what was known as the Leatherman church, which was the mother church in that valley. Over a period of twenty years, ending with his death, he was the presiding elder of the congregation known as New Creek.

*Leatherman, Isaac W.*

Bro. Isaac W. was elected to the ministry in the Beaver Run church about 1880. He later moved to Kansas and did quite a bit of preaching there with John Wise. He then moved to Florida and was drowned in the hurricane of 1928.

*Leatherman, J. B.*

Bro. J. Bennie Leatherman was born in 1877. After being married for a short while to Allie King of Eglon, he was killed by a horse and thus a promising life came to an early end. He had served in the ministry but a short while.

*Leatherman, John M.*

Bro. John M. was born in February 1848 near Purgitsville, West Virginia. He married Amanda J. Pier on October 7, 1871, and to them were born Martha, Charles, Lena, Laurie, and Mamie. He was an elder of the church and a farmer. His death occurred on April 12, 1936, at his home.

*Leatherman, John R.*

Bro. John R. is of the Leatherman families of West Virginia, but he moved to Kansas and was there called to the ministry. He did a lot of pioneer preaching there, but now resides in Florida.

*Leatherman, Mary Martin*

Sister Mary Martin lived in West Virginia and did a good deal of preaching through the district in evangelistic work. Later she married Bro. Ernest Leatherman; she now resides at Union Bridge, Maryland, he having died.

*Leatherman, Nicholas, Sr. and Jr.*

Dr. Nicholas Leatherman, medical doctor and minister, was the first to preach at Thrasher Springs, near the Bethel church. He must have moved there somewhat before 1898. There he and John M. Leatherman worked faithfully for nearly twenty years. He traveled much in his ministry of healing and used the opportunities to bring some of the Spirit of God to his people.

There were other people of the same name. The All Leatherman-Kin History (1940) tells of a Nicholas Leatherman, born in Hampshire County, on November 4, 1826, who died April 11, 1890. He married Catherine Arnold of Beaver Run, daughter of Jacob Arnold. He was an elder in the Church of the Brethren and a physician. He and his wife traveled in a buggy or on horseback all over the country, caring for the sick.

There were others, one of them still an older one who died in Hampshire County in 1870, but I do not know whether he was a minister or not.

There is a Nicholas Leatherman, born near Purgitsville, West Virginia, now living in Westernport, Maryland, who served in the ministry for a time.

*Leatherman, Raphael*

Bro. Raphael was elected to the ministry in the Knobley congregation on June 6, 1903, and has lived and served in that congregation ever since. He loves and serves the church there.

*Lyon, Michael*

Bro. Lyon was born in 1826, and according to Kline's diary, page 261, was established (ordained) in 1849, and he, with

Thomas Clark, Sr., had charge of the Greenland congregation for a time. Before that he and Elder William Michaels served together for a while.

*Lyon, Thomas D.*

Bro. Thomas Lyon was called to the ministry in the Greenland congregation and there served much of his ministry. He was one of the early ministers.

*Lyon, William M.*

Bro. William Lyon was called to the ministry by the Greenland congregation and served in that congregation.

*Ludwick, Berzy B.*

Berzy, second son of Daniel and Catherine George Ludwick, was born near Hartmansville, West Virginia, on June 7, 1877. His father, Daniel, Jr., was born near Junction, West Virginia, and was the son of Daniel Ludwick, Sr., who had moved from Pennsylvania and whose father had come from Germany. Berzy's mother was the daughter of Elder William George, of English descent. Daniel, Jr., and Catherine George were married in 1874 and to this union seven sons were born. They, after several moves, settled on a farm near Junction and lived there until death. Here Berzy worked on the farm, often leaving home at three o'clock in the morning to go to market, a round trip of from thirty-five to fifty miles, getting home at about ten at night.

Berzy's education was secured by attending school a few months of the year, by borrowing books and studying them, making the most of his opportunity, often studying till midnight. In 1919 he and his family went to Chicago so he could complete his course in chiropractic in the National College of Chiropractic. He graduated in 1920.

In 1893 he united with the church and was baptized by George S. Arnold; he was elected to the deaconship in the Beaver Run congregation in 1894. During the period, 1898-1900, he was working in Keyser and there he located several members of the church, among whom was Winfield Miller, a minister. They organized a Sunday school, secured Carskadon's Hall and began the first services of the Church of the Brethren in Keyser.

In 1900 he visited Elder R. T. Hull of Somerset County, Pennsylvania, and there met Lulu C. Baughman, whom he married on

September 30, 1903. There he was called to the ministry on November 30, 1905, and there he began preaching. He has served pastorates as follows: Jacobs Creek, 1910-11; Greenland, 1920-1922; Wilmington Mission, Delaware, 1925-27; Quakertown, Pennsylvania, 1929-36; Markleysburg, Pennsylvania, 1936-. Wherever he has served, his churches have thrived and prospered and he has worked hard. His good wife has been an encouragement and help. They have children as follows: Henry D. of Keyser, Harry A. of Keyser, Ray E. of York, Pennsylvania, Blondell of Perkasie, Christine at home.

*Liston, Lloyd*

Bro. Liston, son of Abraham and Eliza C. Wolfe Liston, was born near Bruceton Mills on November 27, 1888, and died December 25, 1939. He had always lived near the place of his birth. He was baptized into the church at the age of sixteen, and loved and faithfully served the church until death. He was elected to the ministry in 1918 and in that capacity served his home church and congregation, along with about twenty years of teaching school. His funeral was conducted by Pastor R. K. Showalter, and interment was in the Mt. Grove cemetery.

*Martin, Charles W.*

Charles, the son of Taylor Martin, was born July 28, 1872, at Martin, West Virginia; he died January 21, 1943. He was married first to Anna Morgan of Huntingdon, Pennsylvania; one son, Taylor, was born to them. His second marriage was to Allie B. Rotruck; they have one son, Solomon. He was baptized into the Church of the Brethren at the age of twenty-one in the Knobley congregation, called to the ministry June 4, 1898, and later ordained to the eldership. He attended a Bible school in Philadelphia, spent two and one-half years in Los Angeles, California, working, preaching, and attending a Bible school. He spent some time in Pennsylvania preaching, two years at Walnut Grove, near Moorefield, West Virginia, and four years in the Bethel congregation at Old Fields, West Virginia. He attended Annual Conferences whenever possible. He taught public school several years, preached, and did Sunday-school work at the same time. No place was too isolated, but in schoolhouse or home, where no one else went, where people were too poor to pay but longed for the gospel, there he preached. Though blind for several years, he was always cheerful.

He baptized many and performed many marriages. His last days were spent in the Knobley congregation where he had spent his boyhood days, and where he was baptized, elected to the ministry and ordained. He was always a faithful worker and a cheerful giver. He never missed services unless sick. Though his pew is vacant here he fills another one in heaven.

*Martin, Ralph*

Ralph was born at Streby, West Virginia, on September 27, 1921, and lived there until a few years later when the family moved to near Eglon, in the Eglon congregation. On September 1, 1943, he was installed into the ministry; since then he has been in Bethany Biblical Seminary, serving during the summers in the Willow Creek church, near Wetonka, South Dakota.

*Martin, Raymond E.*

Raymond was born at Streby, West Virginia, May 8, 1911, and spent the early years of his life on a farm there. Later his parents moved to Eglon, West Virginia; there he completed his grade school work and then took his high school work at Aurora. At the Maple Spring church on June 1, 1931, he was called and licensed to preach and he began filling appointments about there immediately. On June 1, 1932, he was installed into the ministry and served the Onego church as its pastor, 1932-33. At this place he met Mary Huffman, and they were married on June 7, 1933; to this union a son and a daughter have been born. On November 10, 1939, he was ordained to the eldership and in that year served his district on Standing Committee at the La Verne Conference, being the youngest man on the Committee. He has served the Morgantown church as pastor, and is now answering a call to the Peters Creek church in Virginia.

*Michaels, William*

Bro. Michaels was elected speaker at a council held by Elder John Kline in the Greenland congregation, May 21, 1849. He and Elder William George served jointly as overseers of that congregation from about 1882 until about 1886 when an accident ended his life.

*Miller, Abraham*

Bro. Abraham Miller was one of the first ministers in the Tear Coat congregation, coming a little later than Bro. Dietrick. He preached a good bit in the Shickle schoolhouse.

*Miller, Harold Clayton*

Harold C. was born at Eglon, West Virginia, on April 5, 1892, to Aaron and Lydia Miller. He became a member of the church at the age of thirteen, attended Blue Ridge College, 1914-17, married Blanche Bonsack, daughter of the well-known and beloved Charles D. Bonsack, in 1917. Both Harold and Blanche graduated in medicine at the University of Cincinnati in 1921, and since 1922 the two of them have practiced medicine at Eglon, where they have a large and thriving practice. Their name as doctors is respected and worthy the name, Christian doctor.

In addition to the practice of medicine, both have faithfully served the church at Eglon. Dr. Harold takes his turn in the pulpit at Maple Spring and for years has taught the men's Bible class, as well as assisted in the Sunday evening work. Dr. Blanche has served in many ways. They have combined well the practice of medicine and Christian service.

*Miller, Jeremiah*

Bro. Miller was baptized in 1852. He was elected to the ministry in 1866, though, excepting one or two sermons, he never tried to preach. He was married to Anna Fike, daughter of Peter and Magdalene Fike. His death occurred in 1909.

*Miller, John Curtis*

Bro. Miller was born at McDaniel, Maryland, on May 21, 1906. He lived in that state until he was eleven years of age, when the family moved to West Virginia. His education was received in the following advanced schools: Blue Ridge Academy, Keyser High School, Potomac State, Daleville Academy, Bridgewater College (graduated in 1931), Shepherd College, and West Virginia University. He began teaching in 1932 and completed ten years as principal of the Burlington school. He was licensed to preach in 1926 and ordained to the ministry in 1928. On August 22, 1934, he married Dorothy Louise Ikenberry. They have one daughter, Doris Eleanor. He has served in the following capacities: chairman board of Christian education, First West Virginia, 1944; chairman, education committee, Camp Galilee, 1944-; adult director of youth, First West Virginia, 1944-.

*Miller, Roy K.*

The ninth of twelve children, Roy was born near Lineboro, Maryland, on October 20, 1901. He attended school at Eliza-

bethtown Academy, Elizabethtown College, Blue Ridge College, and Shepherd State Teachers' College (A.B. 1944). He was licensed to the ministry May 13, 1925, installed 1926, and ordained to the eldership in the Keyser, West Virginia, church in 1933. He has served the church as part-time pastor at the Beaver Creek church, Maryland, 1925-26; as full-time pastor at Enders, Nebraska, 1928-30; Keyser, West Virginia, 1930-34; Juniata Park, Pennsylvania, 1934-36; Pitsburg, Ohio, 1936-39; Brownsville, Maryland, 1939-. He was joined in holy matrimony to Mary B. Summers, on August 16, 1927, and to this union three children have been born: Betty E., John C., and Mark. Bro. Miller has also served the church in the following capacities: chairman of district B.Y.P.D.; adult adviser in First District of West Virginia; on mission board in Maryland; Standing Committee from West Virginia at the Ames, Iowa, Conference, from Middle Maryland at Asheville, North Carolina, and at McPherson, Kansas. At present he serves on the district mission board and ministerial board in Maryland.

*Muntzing, Ernest E.*

Ernest was born to Brother and Sister W. H. Muntzing on September 10, 1907, at Scherr, West Virginia, but when he was eight years old the family moved to Maysville, where they have resided ever since. He united with the church at the age of eleven in a revival conducted by John H. Cassady, at which meeting there were eighty professions of faith. At the age of sixteen he was licensed to preach at the Brick church and was installed into the ministry one year later. In 1941 the Cook's Creek congregation in Virginia ordained him to the eldership.

His high school training was secured at the St. John's Academy and Daleville Academy, which he finished in 1926. He graduated from Bridgewater College in 1931 and later attended the universities of New Mexico and Arizona.

He married Margaret Rhodes Early on April 26, 1930, and to this union two daughters have been born: Joye Elaine, eight years old, and Eleanor Jean, four. They have lived at Harrisonburg, Virginia, since 1941.

The early part of Ernest's life was devoted to sales and sales managing, at which success attended his efforts. However, in 1939 the Lord called him into evangelistic work and since then

he has devoted most of his time to that work, at a financial sacrifice. Since then he has worked in sixty-five meetings and as a result over six hundred souls have been led to the Lord.

*Nine, Garfield*

Bro. Nine was elected to the ministry in the Allegheny congregation in the year 1903. He later moved to California and was ordained there.

*Parish, J. A.*

Bro. Parish was elected to the ministry in the Sunnyside congregation on May 28, 1892.

*Parker, Perry S.*

Bro. Parker, of the Maysville vicinity, served for a few years as a minister of the church, mostly in the evangelistic field, being known as the "concert evangelist." He no longer serves as a minister.

*Pifer, Sam*

Brethren Sam Pifer and Aaron Fike were called to the ministry in the Eglon congregation at the same time, in 1861, the election being held in the springhouse loft of a member living near the old Accident school. Bro. Pifer died in 1908.

*Poling, Newton D.*

Newton was born March 25, 1914, at Philippi, West Virginia, to Columbus H. and Willye Idleman Poling. He was a member of the United Brethren Church from 1927-34, but in 1934 was baptized into the Church of the Brethren in the Greenland congregation, by Alva Harsh. The Brick church licensed him to preach in 1935, and there he was ordained in 1936. His services to the church have been as follows: summer pastor, Staunton, Virginia, 1936; summer pastor, Ten Mile church, Western Pennsylvania, 1937; student pastor, Hopewell, Virginia, 1937-39; student assistant, Elgin, Illinois, 1939-40; pastor, Mt. Carmel congregation, Virginia, 1941-1944; pastor, Summit congregation, Virginia, 1944-. He was schooled at Alderson-Broaddus College; Bridgewater College, 1936-37; Union Theological Seminary, 1937-39; Bethany Biblical Seminary, 1939-41. On May 26, 1941, he was married to Virginia Dare Smith, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Leander Smith; to them a son, James Newton, was born on December 14, 1942.

*Riggleman, M. L.*

Marion Riggleman was born April 23, 1887, on the farm one mile north of Rockoak, West Virginia, where he was also reared. His parents were Joseph W. and Abigail Heare Riggleman. After completing the grade school and a normal school course at Glendale he taught in the public schools of West Virginia. On April 28, 1909, he married Malissa F. Bucklew and to them were born six children, four of whom survive. His wife passed away on February 6, 1919. On July 21, 1920, he married Tempa S. Garrett, and to them was born one son. Marion was baptized in November 1902, licensed to preach on April 7, 1928, installed into the full ministry on April 13, 1929, and ordained to the eldership on November 3, 1929. From the time of his licensing he became active in the ministry, serving his home congregation part time as pastor and part time as elder, in which capacity he still serves. He has the welfare of the church at heart and serves faithfully.

*Riggleman, W. L.*

Near Rockoak, West Virginia, on June 29, 1878, Bro. Riggleman was born. He was elected to the ministry June 20, 1899; installed May 17, 1902; ordained November 4, 1911. Immediately upon having been called to the ministry, he became active in the service of the church. He spent the summer of 1901 near Gortner, Maryland, serving the Eglon congregation at Gortner, Glade View, and Terra Alta. The summer of 1902 he served the Salem congregation in Virginia, and the Tear Coat congregation in 1903. Then he went back to Rockoak and served the Bean Settlement congregation from 1904 to 1924. That winter he served at Wiley Ford, and since 1925 has been serving the Salem congregation in Virginia.

He was united in marriage to Emily May Bucklew on September 16, 1902, Elder B. W. Smith officiating. His wife has been an invalid for many years but he has been a faithful, patient, cheerful Christian husband and their home life has been happy and blessed.

*Roberts, I. F.*

Bro. Roberts, son of Thomas and Sarah Leatherman Roberts, was born December 15, 1854, and elected to the ministry May 28, 1892. He was married on March 1, 1881, to Loretta Davis; a later marriage was to Jennie Kitzmiller. He served in the New Creek congregation (Sunnyside).

*Rollins, Bernard McClain*

Bro. Rollins was born March 27, 1908, in Garrett, Somerset County, Pennsylvania, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Francis A. Rollins. He received his high school education at Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania, and his college education at Potomac State in Keyser, West Virginia, and Juniata College, Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. He holds the honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from the American Bible College.

On November 30, 1929, he was married to Sister Eva Virginia Martin, daughter of Brother and Sister H. F. Martin of Keyser, West Virginia. She is a graduate of the high school in Keyser and of Potomac State College in Keyser. He was called to the ministry by his home church in Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania, and was duly licensed to preach by Elder M. J. Brougher in 1927, and installed into the ministry the following year by Elder Galen B. Royer.

He served as supply pastor of the church in Frostburg, Maryland, one year, 1928-29, and as full-time pastor of the church in Keyser two years, 1928-30. In November 1930, he and Sister Rollins entered upon full-time evangelistic work and have been engaged continuously in that work ever since; during this time they have conducted more than two hundred fifty revivals which have taken them more than three hundred thousand miles through thirty-six states.

They maintain their headquarters at Keyser, West Virginia. To them was born one daughter, Bernardine Virginia, on November 17, 1943.

*Rotruck, Noah*

Bro. Rotruck was elected to the ministry in the Knobley congregation, but the time of his election cannot be found.

*Seese, Norman A.*

Bro. Seese was born at Alum Bank, Bedford County, Pennsylvania, February 1, 1886. He married Anna A. Bowman of Johnson City, Tennessee, on June 6, 1917. He graduated from Bridgewater College, A. B., 1915; M. A., 1917.

For a number of years the family served in China in various types of mission work, then as pastor at Easton, Maryland, and for about three years at Petersburg and Greenland in West Virginia. At present they are in the Second District at Junior,

West Virginia. While in the First District they were active in various phases of district work and in the work at Camp Galilee.

*Self, Charles Victor*

Bro. Self was born February 15, 1910, at Forman, West Virginia, to John and Rachel Keplinger Self. By the time he had finished the grade school at Forman his parents moved to Fort Ashby, where he entered and completed junior high school. At Fort Ashby he accepted Christ in a Methodist revival on October 16, 1926, but did not affiliate with that church. On March 20, 1932, he was baptized and united with the Church of the Brethren in the Old Furnace congregation, where he immediately became a worker.

He felt the call of the Lord to larger service and was licensed to the ministry on May 9, 1942, and ordained on May 7, 1943. Since that time he has taken his part in the ministry of the home congregation as well as served elsewhere when called. He earns his living as a trackman on the B. & O. Railroad.

On October 8, 1932, he was married to Elizabeth Abe; one son has blessed their home.

*Shanholtz, Bruce*

Bruce, son of Luther and Delcie Shanholtz, has been serving in the ministry for only a few months, having been licensed by the Wiley Ford congregation. A little later he and his family moved to the Capon Chapel congregation, where they now serve the church. They have two children.

*Shanholtz, Luther*

Bro. Shanholtz was placed in the ministry by the Capon Chapel congregation early in the century. He served his own congregation for some time, and worked in the field of evangelism some. He is at present not in the ministry.

*Shanholtz, Vernon*

Bro. Vernon, son of Luther and Delcie Shanholtz, has given much faithful work to the upbuilding of the church at Wiley Ford. With his coming to that church, it began to take on new life, and grew from a mere mission point of the Old Furnace congregation to a new congregation with its own house and pastoral program. At present he serves that church and the Danville mission in Maryland as pastor.

He and his wife live in their own home near Wiley Ford. They have one daughter, Muriel.

*Showalter, Arnold Ray*

Bro. Showalter was born March 30, 1902, in Rockingham County, Virginia. He finished his high school work at Daleville Academy in 1925, his college work at Bridgewater in 1930, and his seminary work at Bethany in 1933.

The Daleville church licensed him to preach in December 1924, the Selma church in Virginia called for his installation in August 1925, and at the request of the Pike Creek church in Indiana he was ordained to the eldership in October 1930.

He served as pastor at Selma, Virginia, 1925-29; Summit church, Virginia, summer of 1929; Pike Creek church, Monticello, Indiana, 1929-33; Buena Vista church, Virginia, 1933-35; Copper Hill church, Virginia, 1935-40; Keyser church, West Virginia, 1940-. He also served twice as Standing Committee delegate—once from Virginia and once from the First District of West Virginia. In West Virginia he has served on the ministerial board for three years and as moderator of district conference once.

On September 3, 1929, he was married to Edna Louise Garst of Salem, Virginia. To them two children have been born: James Hubert, September 16, 1930; and Margaret Jean, February 10, 1933; both were born at Monticello, Indiana.

*Showalter, Cecil O.*

Cecil was born in Rockingham County, Virginia, in 1901. He graduated from Daleville Academy in 1925, from Bridgewater College in 1930, and from Bethany Biblical Seminary in 1934 with the B. D. degree. He served the Keyser church in West Virginia as pastor from 1934 to 1940. During those years he was one of the leaders who saw the need for more training for our young people and who led in acquiring Camp Galilee. He served as its manager for several years. He served on the district ministerial board all six years while in West Virginia.

*Showalter, Russell K.*

On January 17, 1898, in Rockingham County, Virginia, Russell was born to David and Margaret Showalter, being their sixth son. (Two younger brothers, Cecil and Ray, are active in the ministry now.) He united with the church in the North

Mill Creek congregation, Virginia, receiving baptism at the hands of Elder Samuel Pence. This, his home congregation, called him to the ministry in 1920. The Lebanon church brought about his ordination to the eldership in 1934.

His education was secured as follows: elementary schools of Rockingham County, Virginia; high school at Weyers Cave, Virginia; B. A., Bridgewater College; B. D., Bethany Biblical Seminary. He has served in pastoral relations as follows: Rosepine, Louisiana, two years; Roanoke, Virginia, three years; Muncie, Ind., four years; and is now serving the Sandy Creek congregation in First West Virginia.

He was married to Anna Florence Cline on September 2, 1925, and they now have three children.

*Simmons, Omar N.*

Omar is the faithful minister of the church at Sugarland, Mackeysville, Rosendale, and Mill Run. As he says, he works in the tannery for a living but preaches Christ. He has been a member of the church for about ten years and an ordained minister about seven. He lives in his own home in Hamilton and is happy in the service of the church.

*Smith, Benjamin W.*

Bro. B. W. Smith was born in Hampshire County, West Virginia, near what is known as Hoy, on September 4, 1860. He united with the church at the age of nineteen, and was baptized by Elder D. B. Arnold. He was elected to the ministry at the age of twenty-seven years and was ordained to the eldership soon afterward. He has served in the ministry for about fifty-five years and is still active and able to drive his car.

He has lived a life of very active service for his church and his Master. Many congregations in West Virginia owe their start in large part to his faithful pioneering work. He has served the district in many capacities, on various boards, and especially on the board of trustees for the orphanage at Eglon. Besides that he was a farmer, a maker of coffins, and a funeral director. Often he served at a funeral as the maker of the coffin, as funeral director, and as minister. He has served as elder of many congregations in the district, and of some of them for many years. He has worked faithfully in the compiling of material for this history.

*Smith, Samson*

Bro. Samson Smith was called to the ministry in the Greenland congregation.

*Smith, William*

Bro. Smith was elected to the ministry in the Knobley congregation but the time of his election cannot be found. His health gave way and he passed on to his reward several years ago.

*Snyder, Phineas*

Bro. Snyder was elected to the ministry in the Knobley congregation May 14, 1910. After serving for a while in that congregation he moved to Deer Park, Maryland, and is now serving in the Oak Grove congregation in Western Maryland.

*Spaid, Daniel B.*

Daniel B. Spaid, the seventh son and the tenth child of Nicholas Leatherman Spaid and Sarah Angeline Spaid, was born June 13, 1890, at Concord, Hampshire County, West Virginia. On August 18, 1909, he was baptized into the Church of the Brethren by Elder A. W. Arnold and following that spent a part of the year in Blue Ridge Academy. The following spring he took the teachers' uniform examination and began teaching in the fall of 1910; he continued teaching for eight years in Hampshire County and eleven years in Preston County.

On June 15, 1918, he was licensed to preach by Elders George S. and Peter Arnold. On July 22 of the same year he was called to the army and entered as a conscientious objector, was placed in the medical corps and left for France on September 4. His first two sermons were preached in a French barrack at All-camps, France, which the Americans were using as a Y.M.C.A. Returning home May 23, 1919, he preached his third sermon at Maple Spring on June 1.

He married Grace Fike, daughter of Elder Jonas Fike, on August 28, 1919. He was ordained to the eldership on November 11, 1934, by Elders E. T. Fike, A. S. Arnold, and Earle Fike. Since his marriage he has lived in the Eglon congregation, farming, teaching school and serving the Eglon church as one of her faithful ministers, and also serving as minister for a number of years in the Red Creek congregation. They have one adopted son, at present in a C.P.S. camp, and one son still at home.

*Staggs, Slone*

Bro. Staggs is a rather young minister in the Beaver Run congregation.

*Teets, W. Lindsey*

On November 28, 1883, near Terra Alta, in the bounds of the Cheat River congregation, Bro. Teets was born. He attended the elementary schools to get all the education he could, there being no high schools then, and later had two summers at a normal school and one summer at Potomac State. He has lived on a farm all his life and in addition to farming and preaching has taught in the rural schools for thirty-two years.

He united with the church in October 1897 during a meeting held at the Freeland church by E. T. Fike. Two years later he was elected to the office of deacon. On August 2, 1903, he was united in marriage to Dora Elma Fike, daughter of Elder John S. Fike. To this union were born six children, and in addition they also secured from the Eglon orphanage Virginia Reel and Harry Largent and gave them a home for a number of years.

Bro. Teets was elected to the ministry in December 1910 and installed by Elder C. D. Bonsack; about a year later he was advanced to the second degree, and a few years afterward to the eldership. He has taken his turn in the appointments in the Eglon congregation, and before the days of good roads walked and rode over Tucker, Randolph, and Pendleton counties preaching. He has been a humble and faithful servant of the church, working in the pulpit and the Sunday school.

*Thomas, Chester A.*

In the village of Hazelton, West Virginia, Chester, son of Jeremiah and Susanna Seese Thomas, was born March 25, 1886. He was reared on a farm. He attended the public schools of the state, and Fairmont State Teachers College, and began teaching in 1905; he still continues teaching.

On May 19, 1908, he was married to Grace Wolfe and to them were born two daughters, Pauline Edna in 1910 and Alma Grace in 1916. Chester joined the church at the age of fourteen, was elected to the deaconship in 1910, to the ministry in 1913, was advanced to the second degree in 1915, and in 1935, after the death of his father, Jeremiah, was elected presiding elder of the Sandy Creek congregation. Thus as a farmer, teacher, and minister of the gospel he serves his community.

*Thomas, Jacob*

The Thomas family started with three brothers who came from Wales in colonial days. One, Alexander, located on a farm in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. His son Michael was born in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. There he married and to that union were born seven sons and three daughters. Jacob, subject of this sketch, was the oldest; he was born March 15, 1795.

In 1810 the family moved to a farm near Markleysburg, Pennsylvania, near the West Virginia line. There Jacob grew to manhood. His mother was the first person to be baptized in the Sandy Creek congregation. On August 8, 1816, he was united in marriage to Mary Fike. On his farm about four miles east of Brandonville he built his pioneer home and there spent the rest of his life. Four sons and six daughters were born to them. One grandson, Jeremiah, became a great leader in the church and a great minister.

When thirty-five years of age Jacob united with the church and became an earnest student of the Bible, being able to read both German and English. In 1836, one year after the organization of the Sandy Creek congregation, he was called to the ministry, and became a preacher with a great gift as expounder of Christian doctrines, and as a missionary. In 1841 he was ordained to the eldership, the first elder called in the First District of West Virginia. Under his fatherly shepherding the church grew, and in 1845 the Salem church house was built.

But his ministry was not confined to his home church. Astride his horse he planted the seed of the gospel over a wide territory in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Maryland. Sometimes he was gone for three or four months. Sometimes he traveled in company with Elders Samuel A. Fike and Jacob Beeghly. He was a large man and had great endurance. He was a leader in his district, and served as moderator, and also as delegate to Standing Committee, several times. He was widely read and well informed.

On November 21, 1881, at the age of eighty-six years, he passed on and his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery, not far from the Salem church. The home place was divided between Noah and Scott, grandsons. The eldership of the

church passed to his grandson, Jeremiah, and at his death to a great-grandson, Chester.

*Thomas, Jeremiah*

Bro. Thomas was born near Brandonville, West Virginia, on June 20, 1862, the son of Andrew and Barbara Boger Thomas, and a grandson of Jacob M. Thomas. He attended the schools available, once hiring help for his father's farm that he might attend the university. He began teaching school at the age of nineteen and taught for fifteen years. He was a gifted teacher and his pupils learned of the spirit of the Teacher of Galilee through him.

At the age of twenty he was married to Susanna Seese. To them three children were born: Walter, Chester (the present elder of the Sandy Creek congregation), and Ethel.

Most of his life Bro. Thomas lived on his farm near the Salem church, but he had a wide range of interests. Among these interests were: a company store in Hazelton; the bank at Bruceton Mills, which he served as president, cashier, and in other ways; the Bruceton Milling Company, of which he was the president; the Kingwood and Bruceton Telephone Company, of which he was president; helping found a high school; helping get better roads; serving as an honorary member of the W.C.T.U., and many other organizations.

In January 1877 he was baptized by Solomon Bucklew. On January 14, 1882, he was elected to the ministry; on July 4, 1885, promoted to the second degree; and on March 23, 1889, at the age of twenty-six, ordained to the eldership to take charge of the home congregation. Under his care the congregation grew from a group with one small house to one with many houses, one of the largest congregations in the brotherhood. No road was ever too long nor any night too dark for him to answer a call. He was a good elder and pastor, though serving without compensation. During his ministry he preached one thousand eighty-three funerals, baptized one thousand three hundred thirteen persons, married five hundred fifty-seven couples, anointed two hundred forty-five persons, and preached four thousand three hundred twenty-five sermons. He often expressed appreciation for his good wife, who endured hardships at home while he was away preaching the gospel.

For the last few years of his life he was in failing health, suffering of heart disease. In the evening of July 12, 1934, he was found lying on the floor of his home. The end had come suddenly. At his funeral eighteen ministers and two thousand friends and relatives were present.

*Thomas, Michael M.*

Michael Thomas was born in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, on January 18, 1804, and was ordained to the ministry at the same time as Andrew Umbel. Married twice, he was the father of sixteen children. Though he was a minister in the church for many years, his labors were confined to the limits of his local church. He died July 28, 1898, in his ninety-fifth year, and was buried on his own farm.

*Tusing, D. W.*

D. W. Tusing was born August 29, 1891, at Mathias, West Virginia. In 1910 he was baptized by Elder W. L. Riggleman in North River, under the bridge at Bro. John Riggleman's residence, after a revival held by Elder John S. Fike.

He moved to the Old Furnace congregation on September 29, 1923. There he was elected to the office of deacon on October 3, 1928, and installed in the deacon's office on June 12, 1929, Elder B. W. Smith being in charge. Soon he was called to the ministry by the Old Furnace congregation and licensed on April 21, 1938; he was ordained to the ministry on April 19, 1939. The Old Furnace congregation called for his ordination to the eldership November 1, 1941.

He had served faithfully in the work of the Sunday school at Wiley Ford for many years before his call to the ministry. Since being in the ministry he has served in an increasing way his home church and others.

*Umbel, Andrew*

Andrew Umbel, son of Isaac and Nancy Umbel, was born July 9, 1802, near Markleysburg, Pennsylvania. He was married to Anna Thomas on January 22, 1825, and they united with the church in their young days. To them were born three daughters and five sons, three of whom were deacons, and one, Samuel, an elder.

Bro. Umbel was a minister for nearly fifty years, though by trade a tanner. He preached more powerfully by his consistent,

upright life than he did from the pulpit. He gave liberally to the church and to the needy. He did not believe in taking interest for loans, and across the back of notes he held against people he wrote, "This note is without interest." His last words were "Praise the Lord."

*Umbel, Samuel C.*

Samuel, son of Andrew and Anne Thomas Umbel, was born May 20, 1835. They were of English descent. On December 22, 1854, he was married to Martha L. Brown, daughter of a minister of the Church of God. On June 12, 1855, both united with the Church of the Brethren in the Sandy Creek congregation. He was elected to the ministry March 14, 1856, advanced to the second degree in 1860, and in 1906 was ordained to the eldership. He started preaching before he was twenty-one and preached for more than fifty-nine years. He had a large territory to cover, and when Markleysburg separated from Sandy Creek he went with the former.

*Van Sickle, George W.*

George, son of Zechariah and Mary Burgess Van Sickle, was born October 24, 1869, near Glade Farms, West Virginia, in a log cabin on the Maryland-West Virginia state line. They slept on the Maryland side and ate in West Virginia. He attended twenty-seven days in his first school year and only two days in his second.

Sometime before 1898 Bro. Van Sickle was elected to the ministry; the election came as quite a surprise to him. He was called to the eldership in 1917. He lived on his farm near Hazelton and faithfully fulfilled his duty as a minister.

On April 7, 1892, he was married to Martha Guthrie, daughter of Rev. Joseph Guthrie, and to this union were born six children, one of whom, Walter, is a minister.

*Van Sickle, Walter*

Bro. Walter, son of Rev. George and Martha Guthrie Van Sickle, was born in 1895. He was elected to the ministry in the Sandy Creek congregation in April 1918 and advanced to the full ministry April 6, 1919. In the summer of 1923 Bro. Van Sickle attended Bethany Bible School and again in the winter of 1924-25.

In 1922 he was united in marriage to Grace Hewitt. No children have been born into their home, but they have taken two homeless children and reared them as their own. He taught school from 1917-1930. Today he serves his community as postmaster, merchant, and minister of the gospel.

*Vought, Charles E.*

Bro. Vought was born July 3, 1893, at Meyersdale, Pennsylvania. During World War I he was in the army as a conscientious objector, undergoing intense persecution and hardship. One night he spent expecting death at dawn, because he would not put on the uniform.

He was installed into the ministry in the Maple Spring church March 1, 1919, and since that time has served the church as he felt the Lord call him. Because he felt he could serve better in ways other than preaching, he served as superintendent of the Eglon orphanage for six and one-half years. He has taken his turn preaching in the Eglon congregation and held one evangelistic meeting at Rodamer, West Virginia.

They have six children, three boys and three girls, including one orphaned girl whom they are rearing.

*Waybright, Wilma Bittinger*

Wilma Bittinger was born at Brookside, West Virginia, on June 21, 1911, to John and Cora Fike Bittinger. She was baptized in June 1922. She graduated from the Aurora high school in 1929, spent the year 1930-31 at Bridgewater College, spent twelve weeks in 1931 at West Virginia University, and took correspondence courses from Shepherd College and from Columbia University. One year, 1931-32, she taught school. She was licensed to preach September 5, 1930, and permanently licensed September 5, 1931, at the Maple Spring church. On December 24, 1931, she was united in marriage to Noah W. Waybright of Erwin, West Virginia, and to that union children have been born as follows: Glenn Everett, May 11, 1933; Janet Wilma, May 29, 1939; Wendell Noah, October 12, 1942.

Since having been permanently licensed she has taken her turn at the different churches in the Eglon congregation, and has always filled her appointments, excepting when sick; she started filling her appointments when her babies were one month old. The Waybrights always take their children where she preaches

and the good husband takes care of the children during the services. In addition to preaching she has worked faithfully in the Sunday school at Brookside in various offices. She and her husband have served the church faithfully. In addition to her work for the church she shares the work on the home farm.

*Weimer, Asa*

Bro. Asa was born June 9, 1877, the son of Israel Weimer, who was also a minister. His wife, Mary Elizabeth Keplinger, was born April 17, 1890, and died in July 1915. Asa loves the church and his Lord, but, having an impediment of speech, feels he can serve more in other ways than through the pulpit. His services have been mostly in the Greenland congregation. He lives at Streby.

*Weimer, Dennis*

Bro. Dennis was born in 1850. He was elected to the ministry in 1871, in the Eglon congregation.

*Weimer, Israel*

Bro. Weimer was born November 7, 1853. His wife, Margaret Frances Burgess, was born in 1855 and died January 17, 1927. He served earnestly in the North Fork and Greenland congregations, and at times elsewhere. He died January 11, 1929, at his home near Streby, West Virginia.

*Weimer, Jacob*

Bro. Jacob was one of the first ministers in the Eglon congregation. He had three sons, Israel, Dennis, and Samuel, who were ministers. Some of them later moved east of the mountain.

*Weimer, Samuel*

Samuel was a son of Jacob Weimer, who was also a minister. Their home was originally in the Eglon congregation.

*Welch, Carl H.*

Born to Brother and Sister D. P. Welch at Warrensville, North Carolina, on April 12, 1906, was a son whom they named Carl. After finishing college at Bridgewater in 1933 he spent two years serving his home church, Flat Rock, and teaching at the same time. He then spent one year, 1935-36, at Bethany, and the next year in mission work in the mountains of North Carolina.

He was installed into the ministry in August 1932 and ordained to the eldership in September 1937; in that year he came to West Virginia to serve the Petersburg and Greenland churches. He is now residing in the Salem congregation in Northern Virginia and helping out with the local preaching program.

He was married June 9, 1932. His three children are: Helen, 1935; Kenneth, 1937; and Carla Jeane, 1941. He and his wife hope to get back into full-time church work soon.

#### *West, Russell Greene*

Bro. West was born in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, September 12, 1894. He took his high school work at Hebron Brethren Seminary, Nokesville, Virginia, and received his A. B. degree at Bridgewater College in 1922, and his B. D. degree at Bethany Biblical Seminary in 1931. He was converted and baptized at Nokesville in February 1915, called to the ministry and installed in May 1917, and ordained to the eldership in Keyser, West Virginia, in 1924.

He served as summer pastor at Moorefield, West Virginia, in 1920 and 1921, and was pastor of the Keyser church from 1922 to 1928, during which time the membership increased from fifty to two hundred sixty-four. While there he served the First District on the board of Christian education and on Standing Committee at La Verne in 1928. While there he helped start the church at Westernport, Maryland.

He also served as pastor at Batavia, Illinois, 1928-31; Indianapolis, Indiana, 1931-35; First church in Roanoke, Virginia, 1935-39, and at Pampa, Texas, 1939-. He has been very active in religious education and training work wherever he has served, having served as director of young people's camps at Mack, Bethel, Galilee, and in the Oklahoma-Texas-New Mexico camps.

He is not native to West Virginia, but he has left a good imprint by his period of service here.

#### *Whitacre, Alphaeus J.*

Bro. Whitacre was born near Okonoko, West Virginia, on September 30, 1869. On March 25, 1896, he married Lacy Ann Abe and shortly afterward moved to near Short Gap, Mineral County. To this union were born nine children, five of whom

are living, and three of whom, Joseph, Jesse, and Howard, are ministers.

In May 1893 he accepted his Lord as Savior, and soon after moving to Short Gap he began a Sunday school in the Abe schoolhouse (1897), at which time his family and that of Jacob Abe were the only Brethren families in the community. This was the beginning of the Old Furnace congregation, and work was carried on continuously from that time.

In 1912 he was called to the ministry and in 1916 to the eldership. He has served faithfully in the Sunday school, the ministry, the eldership, and in the good old way of genuine Brethren hospitality. Elder D. B. Arnold used to say, "It was in Bro. Bud's home that hospitality and a welcome were always found." He was always ready to provide a home for ministers and a stable and feed for their horses. This family has been instrumental in the building up of the Old Furnace congregation.

In 1924 he sold his farm and moved to Wiley Ford and began there the work of the congregation by organizing a Sunday school in a schoolhouse. The work grew to become at present the Wiley Ford congregation. Since 1936 he has made his home with a son, Jesse, near Short Gap.

#### *Whitacre, A. Ruth*

Ruth, daughter of Elder J. C. and Emma Beahm, and wife of Jesse W. Whitacre, was born December 10, 1897, in Brentsville, Virginia. She graduated from the Salisbury, Pennsylvania, high school and taught school the following three years. She graduated from Blue Ridge College with the A. B. degree in 1924. On June 3, 1925, she married Jesse W. Whitacre; to them were born four sons, two of whom, Charles and Daniel, are living.

She gave her heart to the Lord at the age of thirteen years and has served the church through her ministry of teaching, storytelling, music, and mission work. She has served under the district mission board in the mountains of Virginia, under the mission board of Western Pennsylvania among the foreigners, teaching them to use English, to read the Bible, and to sing hymns. In the same capacity she served one summer among the foreigners under the direction of the Windber congregation of Western Pennsylvania. The Old Furnace congregation, feeling the need of more ministerial help and recognizing her ability

also to speak, called her to the ministry, licensing her May 9, 1942, and permanently licensing her on May 7, 1943. She has served faithfully in her home and in her church.

*Whitacre, Charles Jerome*

Charles, the oldest son of Jesse and Ruth Beahm Whitacre, was born near Masontown, Pennsylvania, on April 4, 1926. He attended the public schools of Greencastle, Shamokin, and Reading, Pennsylvania, and the Fort Ashby high school in West Virginia, from which he graduated. He is continuing his education and ministerial training at Elizabethtown College.

He gave his heart to the Lord at the age of seven years. Ever since being old enough he has taken an active part in church and Sunday-school work. He has attended Camp Galilee and been a good camper. On October 16, 1943, the Old Furnace church called him to the ministry and he was licensed. Since then he has been taking his turn in filling the pulpit. His future holds promise of much good for service in the vineyard of the Lord.

*Whitacre, Howard A.*

To Alphaeus J. and Lacy Abe Whitacre their youngest son, Howard, was born April 20, 1906, near Short Gap, West Virginia. At the age of thirteen he united with the church in the Old Furnace congregation. There, on April 11, 1931, he was licensed to preach, installed October 7, 1932, and ordained October 30, 1936. He was married to Orpha M. Bennett on October 2, 1935, and to them one daughter has been born. From the beginning of his ministry he has been active in the service. In June 1938 they moved to their present location at Flintstone, Maryland, to take up the pastorate of the Glendale, Artemas, and Amaranth churches of Middle Pennsylvania. He is the third son of his family serving in the ministry of the Church of the Brethren, the others being Joseph and Jesse.

*Whitacre, J. S.*

Bro. J. S. is a minister of the Old Furnace congregation and there has served most of his ministry, though his work has not been limited to that congregation. For a time he served the Capon Chapel congregation. He resides on a farm near Short Gap, West Virginia.

*Whitacre, Jesse W.*

This son of Elder Alphaeus J. and Sister Lacy Abe Whitacre was born near Short Gap on October 6, 1901. He attended the elementary schools near home and got his high school training at Blue Ridge Academy and McClellandtown, Pennsylvania. He got one year of college training at Elizabethtown College.

At Blue Ridge he met A. Ruth Beahm, daughter of Elder J. C. Beahm. She is also licensed to preach. They were married on June 3, 1925. To this union were born four sons, two of whom are living; Charles is preparing for the ministry.

This family has served the church as follows: pastor, Fairview church, Pennsylvania, beginning 1925; pastor, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, beginning 1928; pastor, Greencastle, Pennsylvania, beginning 1931 (during his pastorate the church more than doubled in membership); pastor, Shamokin, Pennsylvania, beginning 1934; pastor, Reading, Pennsylvania, beginning 1938. In 1940 he moved to Short Gap, West Virginia, again and entered evangelistic work. During the war emergency, however, he has canceled evangelistic meetings and serves his home congregation as minister and elder, but looks forward to more active evangelistic work in the future.

*Whitacre, Joseph*

Bro. Joseph, son of Alphaeus and Lacy Abe Whitacre, was born near Short Gap, West Virginia, and is one of the family of three sons who entered the ministry. His service has been mostly outside the district: in Philadelphia, and other places in Pennsylvania; in Indiana; at present in Pennsylvania again. His wife is Bertha Fike, daughter of Elder Emra Fike.

*Whitacre, Walter*

Bro. Whitacre was elected to the ministry in the Knobley congregation August 19, 1916, and has lived and served in that congregation.

*Wolfe, Calvin*

To John E. and Lydia Wolfe, near Clifton Mills, West Virginia, Calvin R. was born November 18, 1881. He was educated in the schools of West Virginia and Pennsylvania and taught in the schools of those states for thirty-five years. He was married to Cora Wilson and to them three children, Noah, Ruth, and Clar-

ence, were born. On April 5, 1905, he was elected to the ministry in the Sandy Creek congregation, the congregation founded by his grandfather, Jacob M. Thomas. Bro. Wolfe served in this congregation for fifteen years and in the Markleysburg congregation for fifteen years as pastor and elder. At present he lives at Gibbon Glade, Pennsylvania, where he preaches and teaches.

*Wolfe, Marshall R.*

Marshall Wolfe was born October 28, 1884, about two miles west of Red House, Maryland, to Marcellus A. and Naomi Fike Wolfe. He was baptized by Elder Jeremiah Miller in October 1896, elected to the first degree of the ministry in December 1910, forwarded to the second degree in December 1911, and ordained to the eldership in 1922. On September 3, 1918, he was married to Jennie N. Weybright. He is a graduate of Blue Ridge College and Bethany Biblical Seminary, and has done graduate work in West Virginia University. His preaching began in the Eglon congregation, his home church. He has served as assistant pastor at the Hastings Street mission in Chicago, Illinois, and the Wiles Hill church in Morgantown, West Virginia. But he is best known for his service in teaching in the church, Bible institutes, teachers' training schools, and summer camps, for his having taught Bible and history in Blue Ridge College, and above all for his heading the Bible department in Bridgewater College, where his classes are an inspiration and guidance to many of our college youth.

*Ziegler, Edward K.*

Edward Ziegler was born at Royersford, Pennsylvania, January 3, 1903. His education was secured in the public schools of Pennsylvania, Elizabethtown College (1919-1923), Bridgewater College (1926-29), Bethany Biblical Seminary, and Gettysburg Seminary. He was married on May 31, 1924, to Ilda M. Bittinger of Eglon, West Virginia. He was ordained to the ministry at Shamokin, Pennsylvania, on November 26, 1921, and to the eldership at Johnson City, Tennessee, on September 30, 1930. His pastoral service has been as follows: Seneca congregation, West Virginia (1924-26); Johnson City, Tennessee (1929-31); York, Pennsylvania, 1940-. From 1931 to 1938 he was a missionary to India. Other services to the church have been: member of Standing Committee, 1940; representative of the Church

of the Brethren on Federal Council of Churches (1941-); executive committee of Federal Council (1943-); Federal Council Commission on Worship (1941-); Southern Pennsylvania ministerial board and board of Christian education (1941-). He is the author of *A Book of Worship for Village Churches, Country Altars, Worship in the Christian Family, and Rural People at Worship*. He is making a good contribution to the church through his interest in worship and in rural life.

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MAULER, BENJAMIN, aged 85, of Brownfield, died in the Uniontown Hospital Monday, August 4, 1947, at 12:30 p. m. Mr. Mauler was a lifelong resident of Fayette County, was a Frick pensioner since 1926, and was a member of the Methodist church of Brownfield. He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary Emerson Mauler, in 1938 and two daughters, Alice McIntyre Patterson in 1939 and Sussan Mauler Thompson in 1922. Surviving are three daughters, Mrs. Mollie Girard, of East National Pike; Mrs. Eleanor Porter, of Scottdale; Mrs. Jessie Kelly, of Uniontown; three step-children, Mrs. Rowene Dennis, of Pt. Marion; Morgan Scott, of Hopwood; Thomas Scott, of Pittsburgh; eight grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Friends will be received in the DeCarlo Funeral Home 136 N. Gallatin Ave., after 5 o'clock this evening. Funeral arrangements are incomplete.

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It can never be abolished e than can faith.

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FIRST DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA - BETHLEHEM